MEDIÆVAL WALES

A. G. LITTLE

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MEDIÆVAL WALES

CHIEFLY IN THE TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

Six Popular Lectures

BY

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WITH MAPS AND PLANS

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PREFACE

THIS volume contains the substance of a course of popular Lectures delivered at Cardiff in 1901. The work does not claim in any way to be an original contribution to knowledge, and is published on the recommendation of some friends in whose literary judgment I have confidence. In a popular book of this kind I have not thought it necessary to give detailed references to authorities, but a list of a few of the books which I used in the preparation of the Lectures, and which are likely to be interesting to readers of Welsh history, may be useful. Among mediæval works I may mention the two Welsh chronicles—the Annales Cambriæ and the Brut y Tywysogion,

both published in the Rolls Series; Geoffrey of Monmouth's "History of the Kings of Britain" (translated in Bohn's "Six Old English Chronicles"); Giraldus Cambrensis, "The Itinerary and Description of Wales" (translated in Bohn's library); the prefaces, especially those by Brewer, in the Rolls Series edition of Giraldus, will be found interesting. Of the English chroniclers, Ordericus Vitalis, Roger of Wendover, and Matthew Paris are perhaps the most valuable for the history of Wales and the Marches during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Among modern books, the reader may be referred to Rhys and Jones, "The Welsh People"; Freeman, "William Rufus"; Thomas Stephens, "Literature of the Cymry"; Henry Owen, "Gerald the Welshman"; Clark, "Mediæval Military Architecture," and "The Land of Morgan"; Newell, "History of the Welsh Church"; Tout, "Edward I.;" and the "Dictionary of National Biography." Since these Lectures were delivered at least three books on Welsh history have appeared which deserve mention: Mr. Bradley's "Owen

Glyndwr," with a summary of earlier Welsh history; Mr. Owen Edwards's charmingly written volume in the Story of the Nations Series; and Mr. Morris's valuable work on "The Welsh Wars of Edward I."

The maps are taken from large wall maps which I used when lecturing. In drawing up the map of Wales and the Marches at the beginning of the thirteenth century, I had the assistance of my friend and former pupil, Mr. Morgan Jones, M.A., of Ferndale, who generously placed at my disposal the results of his researches into the history of the Welsh Marches.

A. G. LITTLE.

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I

INTRODUCTORY

IN the following lectures no attempt will be made to give a systematic account of a political development, which is the ordinary theme of history. History is "past politics" in the wide sense of the word. It has to do with the growth and decay of states and institutions, and their relations to each other. The history of Wales in the Middle Ages, viewed from the political standpoint, is a failure; its interest is negative; and in this introductory lecture I intend to discuss "the failure of the nation" (to use the words of Professor Rhys and Mr. Brynmor Jones) "to effect any stable and lasting political combination." Wales failed to produce or develope political institutions of an enduring character — failed to become a

state. Its history does not possess the unity nor the kind of interest which the history of England possesses, and which makes the study of English history so peculiarly instructive to the student of politics. In English history we study primarily the growth of the principle of Representative Government, which we can trace for centuries through a long series of authoritative records. That is the great gift of England to the world. Not only has Wales entered on this inheritance; it helped to create it. It was Llywelyn ap Iorwerth who began the revolt against John which led to the Great Charter, and the clauses of the Great Charter itself show that it was the joint work of English and Welsh. Wales again exerted a decisive influence on the Barons' War—the troubles in which the House of Commons first emerged. And Wales—half of it for more than six hundred years—half of it for nearly four hundred—has lived under the public law and administrative system which the Norman and Angevin kings of England built up on Anglo-Saxon foundations.

This public law and this administrative system have become part and parcel of the life and history of Wales. The constitutional history of England is one of the elements which go to make up the complex history of Wales.

The history of Wales, taken by itself, is constitutionally weak; and its interest is social or personal, archæological, artistic, literary—anything but political. And the fact—which is indisputable—that Wales failed to establish any permanent or united political system needs explanation.

The ultimate explanation will perhaps be found in the geography of the country. The mountains have done much to preserve the independence and the language of Wales, but they have kept her people disunited; and the Welsh needed a long drilling under institutions, which could only grow up in a land less divided by nature, before they could develope their political genius.

Wales, owing largely to its geography, had the misfortune never to be conquered at one fell swoop by an alien race of conquerors. Such a conquest may not at

first sight strike one as a blessing, but it is, if it takes place when a people is in an early, fluid, and impressionable stage, as may be seen from a comparison of countries which have undergone it with countries which have not—a comparison, for instance, of England with Ireland or Germany. Perhaps the nearest parallel in the history of Wales to the Norman Conquest of England is the conquest of Wales by Cunedda, the founder of the Cymric kingdom, in the dark and troublous times which followed the withdrawal of the Roman troops from Britain. But though an invader and a conqueror, Cunedda was not an alien; he spoke the same language as the people he conquered and belonged to the same race to which the most important part of them belonged. And this militated against his chances of becoming a founder of Welsh unity. A race of conquerors distinct from the conquered in blood and language and civilisation, must hold together for a time; they form an official governing class, enforcing the same principles of government, and establishing a

uniform administration throughout the country. And the uniform pressure reacts on the conquered, turning them from a loose group of tribes into a nation. This is what the Norman Conquest did for England. But if the conquerors are of the same race and language as the conquered, they readily mix with them; instead of holding together they identify themselves with local jealousies and tribal aspirations. This happened again and again in Germany. A Saxon emperor sends a Saxon to govern Bavaria as its duke and hold it loyal to the central government; the Saxon duke almost instantaneously becomes a Bavarian—the champion of tribal independence against the central government; and so the Germans remained a loose group of tribes and states — a divided people. This illustration suggests one of the reasons why Cunedda's conquest failed to unite Wales.

Again the custom of sharing landed property among all the sons tended to prevent the growth of Welsh unity. Socially it appears far more just and

reasonable than the custom of primogeniture. It is with the growth of feudalism (already apparent in the Welsh laws of the tenth century) that its political dangers become evident. The essence of feudalism is the confusion of political power and landed property; the ruler is lord of the land, the landlord is the ruler. If landed property is divided, political power is divided. When the Lord Rhys died in 1197 leaving four sons, Deheubarth had four rulers and formed four states instead of one; and civil war ensued.

The unity of Welsh history is not to be found in the growth of a state or a political system. But may we regard the history of Wales as a long and heroic struggle inspired by the idea of nationality? A caution is necessary here. It is one of the besetting sins of historians to read the ideas of the present into the past; and to the general public historical study is dull unless they can do so. It is very difficult to avoid doing so; it needs a severe training, a long immersion in the past, and a steady passion for truth above

all things. In no case perhaps is this warning so necessary as in matters involving the idea of nationality. This is characteristic of the present age, but it has not been characteristic of any other to anything like the same extent. We live in an atmosphere of nationality; we have seen it create the German Empire and the kingdom of Italy, and the Welsh University; we see it now labouring to break up the Austrian Empire, and perhaps changing the unchanging East. But the whole history of Europe shows that it is an idea of slow and comparatively late growth. The first appearance of nationality as a conscious principle of political action is found in England—and possibly in France—at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and in Wales about the same time; in the other countries of Europe much later. And it was very rarely till the very end of the eighteenth century that it became a dominant factor in politics. Of course our ancestors always hated a foreigner—but they did not love their fellow-countrymen. The one thing a man hated more than

being driven out of house and home by a foreign invader, was being driven out by his next-door neighbour; and, as his neighbour was more likely to do it, and when he did it, to stay, he hated his neighbour most. A certain degree of order and settled government was necessary before the national idea could become effective.

In mediæval Wales it never succeeded in uniting the people; the petty patriotism of the family stood in the way of the larger patriotism of the nation; local rivalries and jealousies were always stronger than the sense of national unity. The attempt of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth to create a National Council, like the Great Council of England, died with him. In the final struggle with Edward I., when for a few months the idea of Welsh unity was nearest realisation in action, the men of Glamorgan fought on the winning side. Read the "Brut y Tywysogion" and consider how far the actions there related can have been inspired by the feeling of nationality. Here is the account in the "Brut" of what was happening in Wales in 1200

and the following years, the period represented by our map.

"1200. One thousand and two hundred was the year of Christ when Gruffudd, son of Cynan, son of Owain, died, after taking upon him the religious habit, at Aberconway,—the man who was known by all in the isle of Britain for the extent of his gifts, and his kindness and goodness; and no wonder, for as long as the men who are now shall live, they will remember his renown, and his praise and his deeds. In that year, Maelgwn, son of Rhys, sold Aberteivi, the key of all Wales, for a trifling value, to the English, for fear of and out of hatred to his brother Gruffudd. The same year, Madog, son of Gruffudd Maelor, founded the monastery of Llanegwestl, near the old cross, in Yale.

"1201. The ensuing year, Llywelyn, son of Iorwerth, subdued the cantrev of Lleyn, having expelled Maredudd, son of Cynan, on account of his treachery. That year on the eve of Whitsunday, the monks of Strata Florida came to the new church; which had been erected of splendid work-

manship. A little while afterwards, about the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, Maredudd, son of Rhys, an extremely courteous young man, the terror of his enemies, the love of his friends, being like a lightning of fire between armed hosts, the hope of the South Wales men, the dread of England, the honour of the cities, and the ornament of the world, was slain at Carnwyllon; and Gruffudd, his brother, took possession of his castle at Llanymddyvri. And the cantrev, in which it was situated, was taken possession of by Gruffudd, his brother. And immediately afterwards, on the feast of St. James the Apostle, Gruffudd, son of Rhys, died at Strata Florida, having taken upon him the religious habit; and there he was buried. That year there was an earthquake at Jerusalem.

"1202. The ensuing year, Maredudd, son of Cynan, was expelled from Meirionydd, by Howel, son of Gruffudd, his nephew, son of his brother, and was despoiled of everything but his horse. That year the eighth day after the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, the Welsh fought against the castle of Gwerthrynion, which was the

property of Roger Mortimer, and compelled the garrison to deliver up the castle, before the end of a fortnight, and they burned it to the ground. That year about the first feast of St. Mary in the autumn, Llywelyn, son of Iorwerth, raised an army from Powys, to bring Gwenwynwyn under his subjection, and to possess the country. For though Gwenwynwyn was near to him as to kindred, he was a foe to him as to deeds. And on his march he called to him all the other princes, who were related to him, to combine in making war together against Gwenwynwyn. And when Elise, son of Madog, son of Maredudd, became acquainted therewith, he refused to combine in the presence of all; and with all his energy he endeavoured to bring about a peace with Gwenwynwyn. And therefore, after the clergy and the religious had concluded a peace between Gwenwynwyn and Llywelyn, the territory of Elise, son of Madog, his uncle, was taken from him. And ultimately there was given him for maintenance, in charity, the castle of Crogen, with seven small townships. And thus, after conquering the castle of

Bala, Llywelyn returned back happily. That year about the feast of St. Michael, the family of young Rhys, son of Gruffudd, son of the lord Rhys, obtained possession of the castle of Llanymddyvri."

One may almost say that Wales is Wales to-day in spite of her political history. Wales owes far more to her poets and men of letters than to her princes and their politics.

Giraldus Cambrensis laid his finger on the spot, when he said: "Happy would Wales be if it had one prince, and that a good one." A necessary preliminary to the union of Welshmen was the wiping out of all independent Welsh princes except one. Till that happened local feeling would always remain stronger than national feeling; the disintegrating forces of family feuds and personal ambitions and clannish loyalty would always outweigh the sense of national unity.

The Lords of the Marches were slowly doing this for Wales; they were wiping out all the independent Welsh princes except one. We may see the process

going on in the accompanying map, which gives the chief political divisions of Wales at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and we will turn for a few minutes to consider the fortunes of some of these petty states and the manner of the men who ruled them.

The great Palatine Earldom of Chester, a kingdom within the kingdom, was ruled before 1100 by Hugh the Wolf, of Avranches, who conquered for a time the north coast of Wales. In Anglesey he built a castle, and kennelled the hounds he loved so well in a church, to find them all mad the next morning. The stories of his savage mutilation of his Welsh prisoners show that he merited the name of "the Wolf." Yet he was the friend of the holy Anselm, and died a monk. The struggle between Chester and Gwynedd for the possession of the Four Cantreds, the lands between the Conway and the Dee, was almost perpetual during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the fortune of war continually changing. With the extinction of the old line of the Earls of Chester (1237) and the grant of the earldom to

Prince Edward (1254), a new era opened for Wales.

Further south, in the Middle March, along the upper valleys of the Severn and the Wye, the great power of the Mortimers was growing. They had already stretched out a long arm to grasp Gwerthrynion. But the greatest expansion of their power came later, under Roger Mortimer, grandson of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, friend of Edward I. in the wild days of his youth, persistent foe of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd; and soon the Mortimer lands embraced all Mid-Wales and reached the sea, and a Mortimer was strong enough to depose and murder a king and rule England as paramour of the queen. Savage as the Mortimers were, they were mild compared with one of their predecessors. Robert Count of Bellesme and Ponthieu, the great castle builder of his time, became Earl of Shrewsbury and Arundel in 1098. Men had heard tales of his ferocity on the Continent—how he starved his prisoners to death rather than hold them to ransom; how, when besieging a castle, he threw in the horses to fill up the moat, and when

these were not enough he gave orders to seize the villeins and throw them in, that his battering rams might go forward on a writhing mass of living human bodies. These tales seemed incredible in England, but the men of the Middle March believed them when they were "flayed alive by the iron claws" of the devil of Bellesme. In his rebellion against Henry I. the princes of Gwynedd supported him, till their army was bought over by the lying promises of the king; but the day when the Earl of Shrewsbury surrendered to King Henry and the whole force of England was a day of deliverance alike to England and to Wales.

We next come to the group of lordships held about this time by William de Braose, lord of Bramber in Sussex. They stretched from Radnor to Gower, from the Monnow to the Llwchwr, and included the castles of Builth, Brecon, Abergavenny. But he held these lands by different titles, and they were never welded together. William de Braose began his public career by calling the princes of Gwent to a conference at

Abergavenny, and massacring them. He was on intimate terms with King John, who gave Prince Arthur into his keeping; but this was a piece of work which even De Braose recoiled from, and he refused to burden his soul with Arthur's murder. A few years later John suddenly turned against him, and demanded his sons as hostages. His wife, Maud de St Valérie, who lived long in the popular memory as a witch, sent back the answer: she would not entrust her children to a man who had murdered his nephew. The king chased Braose from his lands, caught his wife and eldest son, and starved them to death in Windsor Castle. The Braose family continued to hold Gower, but the rest of their possessions passed to other houses—Brecon to the Bohuns of Hereford, Elvael to Mortimer, Abergavenny to Hastings, Builth first to Mortimer and then to the Crown.

Glamorgan, during our period, was attached to the earldom of Gloucester. From Fitzhamon the Conqueror it passed, through his daughter, to Robert of Gloucester, and early in the thirteenth

century to the great house of Clare, Earls of Gloucester and Hertford, who held the balance between parties in the Barons' War. With the organisation of Glamorgan and with its great rulers we shall deal later. At the time represented by our map, it was in the hands of King John, who obtained it by marriage. John divorced his wife in 1200, but managed to keep her inheritance till nearly the end of his reign; and Fawkes de Bréauté, the most infamous of his mercenary captains, lorded it in Cardiff Castle.

Further west, between the Llwchwr and the Towy, lay the lordship of Kidweli, held by the De Londres family, who had accompanied Fitzhamon in the conquest of Glamorgan, and were lords of Ogmore and founders of Ewenny. One episode in the history of this family may be mentioned —the battle in the Vale of Towy in 1136, when Gwenllian, the heroic wife of Rhys ap Gruffydd, led her husband's forces against Maurice and De Londres, and was defeated and slain by the Lord of Kidweli. Her death was soon avenged by the slaughter of the Normans at

Cardigan. The present castle of Kidweli dates from the later thirteenth century, before the war of 1277, after the lordship had passed to the Chaworths.

In the extreme west, in Dyfed, the land of fiords, Arnulf of Montgomery had early founded the Norman power, but he was involved in the fall of his brother, Robert of Bellesme, and Henry I. tried to form the land into an English shire, and planted a colony of Flemings in "Little England beyond Wales." But it was too far off for the royal power to be effectively exercised there, and the Earldom of Pembroke was granted to a branch of the De Clares, who had already conquered Ceredigion, and built castles at Cardigan and Aberystwyth. The De Clares also held Chepstow and lands in Lower Gwent. The Earldom itself was smaller than the present shire of Pembroke, and William Marshall, who succeeded the De Clares through his marriage with the daughter of Richard Strongbow (1189), owed his commanding position in English history of the thirteenth century far more to his personal

qualities, his courage and wisdom and patriotism, than to his territorial possessions.

It was by driving the De Clares out of Ceredigion in Stephen's reign that Rhys ap Gruffydd laid the foundation of his power, and raised Deheubarth to be the foremost of the native principalities. The Lord Rhys was clever and farseeing enough to win the confidence of Henry II., and received from him the title of Justiciar —or King's Deputy—in South Wales. As long as Owain Gwynedd lived the unusual spectacle was seen of a prince of South Wales and a prince of North Wales working harminously together. But after Owain's death (1170) Rhys fought with his successors over the possession of Merioneth, while Owain Cyfeiliog, the poet-prince of Powys, did all he could to thwart him. In 1197 the death of Rhys, "the head and the shield and the strength of the South and of all Wales," and the civil wars among his sons, opened his principality again to the encroachment of foes on all sides, and removed one danger from Powys. Powys, however, was being

steadily squeezed by the pressure of Gwynedd on one side, and the growing power of Mortimer on the other, and its princes resorted to a shifty diplomacy and a general adherence—open or secret as circumstances dictated—to the English Crown, till they sank at length into the position of petty feudatories of the English king.

The Prince of Gwynedd alone upheld the standard of Welsh nationality, the dragon of Welsh independence; only in Gwynedd and its dependencies did the Welsh public law prevail over feudal custom. And what was the result? Exactly what Giraldus Cambrensis had foreseen and longed for. The eyes of Welshmen everywhere began to turn to the Lord of Eryri, the one hope of Wales. It was an alluring—an inspiring prospect, which opened before the princes of Gwynedd—to head a national movement, drive out the foreigners, and unite all Wales under their sway. Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, at the end of his long reign, deliberately rejected the dream. That is the meaning of his emphatic declaration

of fidelity and submission to Henry III. in 1237. "Llywelyn, Prince of Wales, by special messengers sent word to the king that, as his time of life required that he should thenceforth abandon all strife and tumult of war, and should for the future enjoy peace, he had determined to place himself and his possessions under the authority and protection of him, the English king, and would hold his lands from him in all fealty and friendship, and enter into an indissoluble treaty ; and if the king should go on any expedition he would, to the best of his power, as his liege subject, promote it, by assisting him with troops, arms, horses, and money." Llywelyn the Great refused to dispute the suzerainty of England. This may appear pusillanimous to the enthusiastic patriot, but subsequent events proved the old statesman's wisdom and clearsightedness. His successors were less cautious, were carried away by the patriotism round them and the syren voices of the bards. And to Llywelyn ap Gruffydd the prospect was even more tempting than to Llywelyn ap Iorwerth. The Barons' War weakened the power of

England, and the necessities of Simon de Montfort led him to enter into an alliance with Llywelyn. The expansion of Gwynedd was great and rapid. Llywelyn's rule extended as far south as Merthyr, and made itself felt on the shores of Carmarthen Bay. The Earl of Gloucester found it necessary to build Caerphilly Castle to uphold his influence in Glamorgan. But it was just the expansion of Llywelyn's power which forced Edward I. to overthrow him once for all. "We hold it better"—so ran Edward's proclamation in 1282—"that, for the common weal, we and the inhabitants of our land should be wearied by labours and expenses this once, although the burden seem heavy, in order to destroy their wickedness altogether, than that we should in future times, as so often in the past, be tormented by rebellions of this kind at their good pleasure."

The "Principality" now became shire land—under English laws and English administration. The rest of Wales remained divided up into Marcher Lordships for another two hundred and fifty

years, under feudal laws—a continual source of disturbance and scene of disorder. These were the lands in which the King's Writ did not run, where (to summarise the description in the Statute of 1536) "murders and house-burnings, robberies and riots are committed with impunity, and felons are received, and escape from justice by going from one lordship to another."

Yet the Marcher Lords did something for Welsh civilisation in their earlier centuries. Guided by enlightened self-interest, they often founded towns, granting considerable privileges to them in order to attract burgesses—such as low rents, and freedom from arbitrary fines. Fairs, too, were established and protected by the Lords Marchers. The early lords of Glamorgan seem to have been specially successful in this respect; in the twelfth century immigrants from other parts of Wales are said to have come to reside in Glamorgan, owing to the privileges and comparative security which were to be found there. Nor perhaps has it been sufficiently recognised how soon the

Lords of the Marches began drilling their Welsh. subjects in Anglo-Norman methods of local self-government. Most of the greater Marcher Lords possessed estates in England; not a few of them, such as William de Braose, served as sheriffs in English shires; some, such as John de Hastings, were judges in the royal courts. They introduced into Wales methods of government which they learnt in England, and institutions with a great future before them, like the Franco-Roman "inquest by sworn recognitors," from which trial by jury was developed, were soon acclimatised in the Marches of Wales.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH

II

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH

WHEN Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote, Norman influence in Wales was at its height. In the old days we used to begin English history with William the Conqueror; since Freeman wrote his five thick volumes and proved—not that the Norman Conquest was unimportant—but that it did not involve a breach of continuity, a new start in national life, the pendulum has swung too much the other way, and the tendency of late years has been to underestimate the importance of the Norman Conquest.

The Norman wherever he went brought little that was new; he was but a Norseman—a Viking—with a French polish. He had no law of his own; he had forgotten his own language, he had no literature. But he had the old Norse energy;

which not only drove him or his ancestors to settle and conquer in lands so distant and diverse as Russia and Sicily, Syria and North America, but enabled him to infuse new life into the countries he conquered. Further, he still retained that adaptability and power of assimilation which is characteristic of peoples in a primitive stage of civilisation. With a wonderful instinct he fastened on to the most characteristic and strongest features of the different nations he was brought in contact with, developed them, gave them permanent form, and often a world-wide importance.

The Norman conquerors were not always fortunate in their selection. Ireland has little to thank them for. The most striking characteristic which they found in Ireland was anarchy, and they brought it to a high pitch of perfection. To quote Sir J. Davies's luminous discourse on Ireland, in 1612 : "Finding the Irish exactions to be more profitable than the English rents and services, and loving the Irish tyranny which was tied to no rules of law and honour better than a just and

lawful seigniory, they did reject the English law and government, received the Irish laws and customs, took Irish surnames, as MacWilliam, MacFeris, refused to come to Parliaments, and scorned to obey those English knights who were sent to command and govern this kingdom."

One extortionate Irish custom, called "coigny," they specially affected, of which it was said "that though it were first invented in hell, yet if it had been used and practised there as it hath been in Ireland, it had long since destroyed the very kingdom of Beelzebub."

England and Wales were more fortunate. In England—while the old English literature was crushed out by the heel of the oppressor, the Norman instinct seized on the latent possibilities of the old English political institutions, welded them into a great system, developed out of them representative government, and created a united nation.

In Wales, the Normans paid little or no heed to Welsh laws and political institutions; the law of the Marches was the feudal law of France, the charters of

liberties of the towns were imported from Normandy; the Welsh Marches and border shires were the most thoroughly Normanised part of the whole kingdom. But with a fine instinct for the really great things, in Wales the Normans seized on the literary side—the poetic traditions of the people—giving them permanent form, adding to them, making them for ever part of the intellectual heritage of the whole world.

It may very likely be a mere accident that the earliest Welsh manuscripts date from the twelfth-century—Norman times; it may also imply an increased literary productiveness. It may be due to accidental causes that the first accounts of Eisteddfodau extant date from the twelfth century; it may also be that the institution excited new interest, received new attention and honour, under the influence of the open-minded and keen-sighted invaders. Take, for instance, the account of the great Eisteddfod in 1176, from the Brut y Tywysogion: "The lord Rhys held a grand festival at the castle of Aberteivi, wherein he appointed two sorts of com-

petitions—one between the bards and poets, and the other between harpers, fiddlers, pipers, and various performers of instrumental music; and he assigned two chairs for the victors in the competitions; and these he enriched with vast gifts. A young man of his own court, son to Cibon the fiddler, obtained the victory in instrumental music, and the men of Gwynedd obtained the victory in vocal song; and all the other minstrels obtained from the lord Rhys as much as they asked for, so that there was no one excluded." An Eisteddfod where every one obtained prizes, and every one was satisfied, suggests the enthusiasm natural to a new revival. It was now—when Wales was brought in contact with the great world through the Normans—that modern Welsh poetry had its beginning. The new intellectual impetus is clearly illustrated by the change which takes place in the Welsh chronicles about 1100. Before that time they are generally thin and dreary: they suddenly become full, lively, and romantic. Wales was not exceptional in this renaissance; something of the same sort

occurred in most parts of Europe; and the renaissance is no doubt to be connected with the Crusade, the reform of the Church, in a word, with the Hildebrandine movement, and so ultimately with the Burgundian monastery of Clugny. But it was the Normans who brought this new life to England and Wales; the Normans were the hands and feet of the great Hildebrandine movement of which the Clugniac popes were the head.

Among the Norman magnates who encouraged the intellectual movement in Wales—one stands out pre-eminent—Robert Earl of Gloucester and Lord of Glamorgan, a splendid combination of statesman, soldier, patron of letters. Robert was a natural son of Henry I.—born before 1100—there is no evidence that his mother was the beautiful and famous Nest, daughter of Rhys ap Tudor. He acquired the Lordship of Glamorgan together with the Honour of Gloucester and other lands in England and Normandy, by marriage with Mabel, daughter and heiress of Fitz-Hamon, conqueror of Glamorgan. An account of the wooing is preserved in old

rhymed chronicle: the king conducts negotiations; the lady remarks that it was not herself but her possessions he was after—and she would prefer to marry a man who had a surname. The account is not historical, as surnames had not come in: in the early twelfth century the lady would have expressed her meaning differently. However, there is evidence that she was a good wife: William of Malmesbury says, "She was a noble and excellent woman, devoted to her husband, and blest with a numerous and beautiful family." Robert was a great builder of castles; Bristol and Cardiff Castles were his work, and many others in Glamorgan; he organised Glamorgan, giving it the constitution of an English shire—with Cardiff Castle as centre and meeting-place. After Henry I.'s death, he was the most important man in England, and was the only prominent man who played an honourable part in the civil wars which are known as the reign of Stephen; he died in 1147. His relations with the Welsh appear to have been good; large bodies of Welsh troops fought under him at the battle of Lincoln,

1141—he was probably the first Norman lord of Glamorgan who could thus rely on their loyalty. And it is significant that in the earliest inquisitions extant for Glamorgan—or inquests by sworn recognitors—Welshmen were freely employed in the work of local government.

Robert of Gloucester was a magnificent patron of letters; to his age Giraldus Cambrensis looked back with longing regret as to the good old times in which learning was recognised and received its due reward. To Robert of Gloucester, William of Malmesbury, the greatest historian of the time, dedicated his history, attributing to him the magnanimity of his grandfather the Conqueror, the generosity of his uncle, the wisdom of his father, Henry I. He was the founder of Margam Abbey, whose chronicle is one of the authorities for Welsh history; Tewkesbury, another abbey whose chronicle is preserved, counted him among its chief benefactors; Robert de Monte, Abbot of Mont St. Michel, the Breton and lover of Breton legends, was a native of his Norman estates at Torigny, and wrote a

valuable history of his times. Among the brilliant circle of men of letters who frequented his court at Gloucester and Bristol and Cardiff were Caradoc of Llancarven, whose chronicle (if he ever wrote one) has been lost, and greatest of all Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Geoffrey dedicated his History of the Kings of Britain to Robert: "To you, therefore, Robert Earl of Gloucester, this work humbly sues for the favour of being so corrected by your advice that it may be considered not the poor offspring of Geoffrey of Monmouth, but, when polished by your refined wit and judgment, the production of him who had Henry, the glorious King of England, for his father, and whom we see an accomplished scholar and philosopher, as well as a brave soldier and tried commander."

Not very much is known about Geoffrey. The so-called "Gwentian Brut," attributed to Caradog of Llancarven, on which his biographers have relied for a few details of his life, is very untrustworthy, and, according to the late Mr. Thomas Stephens, was written about the middle of the six-

teenth century, though containing earlier matter. The sixteenth century was a great age for historical forgeries. We find a Franciscan interpolating passages in a Greek manuscript of the New Testament in order to refute Erasmus; a learned Oxonian forging a passage in the manuscript of Asser's "Life of Alfred" to prove that Alfred founded the University of Oxford; and Welsh genealogies invented by the dozen and the yard—reaching back to "son of Adam, son of God." The "Gwentian Brut" or "Book of Abergwm" is in doubtful company. The following seem to be the facts known about Geoffrey. In 1129 he was at Oxford, in company with Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford (not Walter Mapes). His father's name was Arthur; and he was connected with the Welsh lords of Caerleon. He calls himself "of Monmouth," either as being born there, or as having a connection with the Benedictine monastery at Monmouth, which was founded by a Breton, and kept up connections with Brittany and Anjou. He may have been archdeacon—but not

of Monmouth. The first version of his history was finished in or before April, 1139, and the final edition of the History was completed by 1147. In his later years he resided at Llandaff. He was ordained priest in February, 1152, and consecrated bishop of St. Asaph in the same month. In 1153 he was one of the witnesses to the compact between King Stephen and Henry of Anjou, which ended the civil wars. He died at Llandaff in 1153.

We will now turn to consider the sources of his History of the Kings of Britain. Geoffrey says: "In the course of many and various studies I happened to light on the history of the Kings of Britain, and wondered that, in the account which Gildas and Bede, in their elegant treatises, had given of them, I found nothing said of those kings who lived here before Christ, nor of Arthur, and many others; though their actions were celebrated by many people in a pleasant manner, and by heart, as if they had been written. Whilst I was thinking of these things, Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, a man

learned in foreign histories, offered me a very ancient book in the Britannic tongue, which, in a continued regular story and elegant style, related the actions of them all, from Brutus down to Cadwallader. At his request, therefore, I undertook the translation of that book into Latin." At the end of his history he adds: "I leave the history of the later kings of Wales to Caradoc of Llancarven, my contemporary, as I do also the kings of the Saxons to William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon. But I advise them to be silent concerning the kings of the Britons, since they have not that book written in the Britannic tongue, which Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford, brought out of Britannia."

There has been a good deal of controversy as to whether this very ancient book was in Welsh or Breton, but the first question is, Did it ever exist? Was Geoffrey a translator, or an inventor, or a collector of oral traditions current in Wales or Brittany during his time?

There can be little doubt that the conclusion of Thomas Stephens, in the

"Literature of the Kymry," is correct—that "Geoffrey was less a translator than an original author." It is very doubtful whether the Britannic book ever existed, whether it was not a mere ruse, such as was often resorted to by mediæval romancers, and is still a favourite method with modern historical novelists—to give their works an appearance of genuineness. It has been argued against this, that in that case, Archdeacon Walter must have been a party to the fraud—which is incredible. Such an argument implies a large ignorance of the archdeacons of the twelfth century—when it was a question solemnly discussed among the learned—whether an archdeacon could possibly be saved. It would be well if there were nothing worse to bring against them than such an innocent fraud on the public as this. But the strongest argument against the existence of the Britannic book is (not that it is not extant now, but) that the historians of the next generation never saw it. Geoffrey's History at once created a tremendous stir in the literary world—nor was it accepted on trust—but received

with suspicion and incredulity. Thus William of Newburgh, in the latter part of the twelfth century, calls Geoffrey roundly, "a saucy and shameless liar." William, of course, did not know Welsh, and could not have made anything out of the Britannic book, even if he had seen it. This objection does not apply to Giraldus Cambrensis; his knowledge of Welsh was indeed slight —but he had plenty of Welsh-speaking relatives and friends, and he was himself a collector of manuscripts. Gerald refers to "the lying statements of Geoffrey's fabulous history," and implies in a much-quoted passage that he regarded Geoffrey's history as a pack of lies. Speaking of a Welshman at Caerleon who had dealings with evil spirits, and was enabled by their assistance to foretell future events, he goes on: "He knew when any one told a lie in his presence, for he saw the devil dancing on the tongue of the liar. If the evil spirits oppressed him too much, the Gospel of St. John was placed on his bosom, when like birds they immediately vanished; but when the Gospel was removed, and the History of the Britons

by Geoffrey Arthur was substituted in its place, the devils instantly came back in greater numbers, and remained a longer time than usual on his body and on the book." Geoffrey may very probably have used some Britannic manuscript, but it could not have been very ancient; and he certainly did not translate it, but used it as he used Gildas and Bede and Nennius — sometimes quoting their statements, more generally amplifying them almost beyond recognition.

Was Geoffrey merely an inventor? Sometimes — undoubtedly. The long strings of names of purely fictitious princes whom the Roman Consul summoned to fight against King Arthur, at a time when in sober history Justinian was Roman Emperor, are invented by Geoffrey. And consider too his parodies of the practice of historians of referring to contemporary events: an instance of the genuine article is given in Gerald's Itinerary. "In 1188, Urban III. being pope, Frederick, Emperor of the Romans, Isaac, Emperor of Constantinople, Philip, King of France," &c., &c. Now take

Geoffrey's parodies: "At this time, Samuel the prophet governed in Judæa, Æneas was living, and Homer was esteemed a famous orator and poet." Or again: "At the building of Shaftesbury an eagle spoke while the wall of the town was being built: and indeed I should have transmitted the speech to posterity, had I thought it true, like the rest of the history. At this time Haggai, Amos, Joel, and Azariah were prophets of Israel." One may be quite sure that passages like these are not derived from the writings of the ancients, or from oral traditions. One can in some cases trace back his statements and see how much he added to his predecessors. A good instance is his account of the conversion of the Britons under King Lucius, in Bk. IV., cap. 19 and 20, and V., cap. 1 (A.D. 161). Geoffrey's account is circumstantial: King Lucius sent to the Pope asking for instruction in the Christian religion. The Pope sent two teachers (whose names are given), who almost extinguished paganism over the whole island, dedicated the heathen temples to the true God, and

substituted three archbishops for the three heathen archflamens at London, York, and Caerleon-on-Usk, and twenty-eight bishops for the twenty-eight heathen flamens. Now all this is based on a short passage in Bede: "Lucius King of the Britains sent to the Pope asking that he might be made a Christian; he soon obtained his desire, and the Britons kept the faith pure till the Diocletian persecution," which itself is amplified from an entry in the *Liber Pontificalis:* "Lucius King of the Britains sent to the Pope asking that he might be made a Christian." This last does not occur in the early version of the *Liber Pontificalis*, and is irreconcilable with the history and position of the papacy in the second century; but is a forgery, inserted at the end of the seventh century by the Romanising party in the Welsh Church—the party desiring to bring the Welsh Church into communion with the Roman, and so interested in proving that British Christianity came direct from the Pope; and all the talk about the archflamens and archbishops, &c., is pure invention. Notice too what

an important part the places with which Geoffrey is specially connected play in his history: Caerleon is the seat of an archbishopric and favourite residence of Arthur; Oxford is frequently mentioned though it did not exist until the end of the ninth century; the Consul of Gloucester (predecessor of Geoffrey's patron, Robert, Consul of Gloucester) makes the decisive move in Arthur's battle with the Romans.

A parallel case is Geoffrey's account of Brutus and the descent of the Britons from the Trojans. The tradition is found in Nennius, and perhaps dates from the classical revival at the court of Charlemagne. It is clearly not a popular tradition, but an artificial tradition of the learned; but whilst Geoffrey did not invent the legend, he invented all the details—letters and speeches, and hair-breadth escapes and tales of love and war.

Probably his detailed accounts of King Arthur's European conquests—extending over nearly all Western Europe, from Iceland and Norway to Gaul and Italy—are still more the work of Geoffrey's inventive genius, though it is possible

they may rest on early Celtic myths about the voyage of Arthur to Hades, as Professor Rhys suggests, or on late Breton traditions which mixed up Arthur with Charles the Great.

Now let us consider Geoffrey as a gatherer and transmitter of the genuine oral traditions of the Welsh and Breton people. Genuine traditions are true history in the sense that they preserve manners and customs and modes of thought prevalent at the time when they became current. Thus they are on quite a different level from Geoffrey's inventions, though they cannot be taken as containing the history of any of the individuals to whom they profess to relate. He tells us in his preface that the actions of Arthur and many others, though not mentioned by historians, "were celebrated by many people in a pleasant manner and by heart," were sung by poets and handed down from generation to generation, like the poetical traditions of every people in primitive times. There can be no doubt that Geoffrey collected a number of these old stories and wove them into his narra-

tive. Thus, the story of King Lear and his daughters has the ring of a genuine popular tradition about it, though the dates and pseudo-historical setting were probably supplied by Geoffrey. Again, there were certainly prophecies attributed to Merlin current in Geoffrey's time. But one may suspect Geoffrey of doing a good deal more than translate the prophecies of Merlin; he adapted them; one may even suspect him of parodying them. "After him shall succeed the boar of Totness, and oppress the people with grievous tyranny. Gloucester shall send forth a lion and shall disturb him in his cruelty in several battles. The lion shall trample him under his feet . . . and at last get upon the backs of the nobility. A bull shall come into the quarrel and strike the lion . . . but shall break his horns against the walls of Oxford." "Then shall two successively sway the sceptre, whom a horned dragon shall serve. One shall come in armour and ride upon a flying serpent. He shall sit upon its back with his naked body, and cast his right hand upon its tail . . . The second shall ally with the lion; but a quarrel happening they shall encounter one

another . . . but the courage of the beast shall prevail. Then shall one come with a drum, and appease the rage of the lion. Therefore shall the people of the kingdom be at peace, and provoke the lion to a dose of physic!"

Then as to Arthur. In Geoffrey's history he appears mainly as a great continental conqueror—a kind of Welsh Charlemagne. "Many of the most picturesque and significant features of the full-grown legend (as Professor Lewis Jones points out)[1] are not even faintly suggested by Geoffrey. The Round Table, Lancelot, the Grail were unknown to him, and were grafted on the legend from other sources." But he made the Arthurian legends fashionable; he opened for all Europe the hitherto unknown and inexhaustible well of Celtic romance; and it may be said without exaggeration that "no mediæval work has left behind it so prolific a literary offspring as the History of the Kings of Britain."

The value of Geoffrey is not in his fictions about past history, but in his

[1] See his paper on Geoffrey of Monmouth (Transactions of the Cymmrodorion Society, 1899), to which I am much indebted.

influence on the literature and ideas of the future. He stands at the beginning of a new age: he is the first spokesman of the Age of the new Chivalry. Read his glowing account of Arthur's court, where "the knights were famous for feats of chivalry, and the women esteemed none worthy of their love but such as had given proof of their valour in three several battles. Thus was the valour of the men an encouragement for the women's chastity, and the love of the women a spur to the knight's bravery." Or, as an old French version has it, "Love which made the women more chaste made the knights more valorous and famous." We have here a new conception of love which has profoundly influenced life and thought ever since—love no longer a weakness as in the ancient world, or a sin as it seemed to the ascetic spirit of the Church, but a conscious source of strength, an avowed motive of heroism. And it was round Arthur and his court that the French poets of the next generation wove their romances inspired by this conception—the offspring of the union of Norman strength and Celtic gentleness.

GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS

III

GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS

GERALD the Welshman was certainly one of the most remarkable men of letters that the Middle Ages produced — remarkable not merely for the great range of his knowledge, or the voluminousness of his writings, but for the originality of his views and variety of his interests.

In this lecture I intend to give first a general account of his life, and then deal in more detail with his Itinerary through Wales.

We know a great deal about Gerald; he was interested in many things, and not least in himself; he was not troubled by that shrinking sense of his own worthlessness—with the feeling of being not an individual, but a part of a community—which is so characteristic of mediæval

writers, and led them often to omit to mention their own names.

Gerald was born about 1146, at Manorbier, in Pembroke—"the most delightful spot in Wales." His ancestry is interesting. His father was a Norman noble, holding of Glamorgan, William de Barri by name; his mother was the daughter of another Norman noble, Gerald de Windsor of Pembroke, and the famous Nest, daughter of Rhys ap Tudor, the Helen of Wales. He was cousin of the Fitzgeralds who played so important a part in the conquest of Ireland, and connected with Richard Strongbow and the great house of Clare. He thus "moved in the highest circles," and lived in an atmosphere of great deeds and great traditions.

He was from the first marked out by his own inclinations for an ecclesiastical career. He tells us that when he and his elder brothers used to play as children on the sands of Manorbier his brothers built castles but he always built churches. He received an elementary education from the chaplains of his uncle, the Bishop of St. David's; he seems to have been slow at

learning when a child, and his tutors goaded him on not by the birch rod, but by sarcasm—by declining "*Stultus, stultior, stultissimus.*" His higher education was not obtained in Wales, and it is singular that he does not notice any place of learning in Wales in all his writings. He studied at Gloucester, and then at Paris, the greatest mediæval university. We have it on his own authority that he was a model student. "So entirely devoted was he to study, having in his acts and in his mind, no sort of levity or coarseness, that whenever the Masters of Arts wished to select a pattern from among the good scholars, they would name Gerald before all others." Later he lectured at Paris on canon law and theology; his lectures, he tells us, were very popular. He returned thence in 1172, two years after the martyrdom of Thomas Becket, whose example and struggle for the rights of the Church made a deep and lasting impression on him. Gerald soon obtained preferment: he held three livings in Pembroke, one in Oxfordshire, and canonries at Hereford and St. David's. His energy soon made itself felt. He

excommunicated the Welshmen and Flemings who would not pay tithes; and then attacked the sins of the clergy. Most of the Welsh clergy were married, contrary to the laws of the Church. Gerald hated a married priest even more than he hated a monk. The Welsh priest, he says, was wont to keep in his house a female (*focaria*) "to light his fire but extinguish his virtue." "How can such a man practice frugality and self-denial with a house full of brawling brats, and a woman for ever extracting money to buy costly robes with long skirts trailing in the dust?" Gerald hated women—the origin of all evil since the world began: observing that in birds of prey the females are stronger than the males, he remarks that this signifies "the female sex is more resolute in all evil than the male." Among the married clergy he attacked was the Archdeacon of Brecon; and the old man, being forced to choose between his wife and his archdeaconry, preferred his wife. Gerald was made Archdeacon of Brecon. In later years he had qualms of conscience about the part he took in this business.

Between 1180 and 1194 he was often at Court and employed in the king's affairs. Henry II. selected him as a suitable person to accompany the young prince John to Ireland in 1185, and the result was his two great works — "The Topography," and "The Conquest of Ireland," which are the chief and almost the only authorities for Irish history in the Middle Ages. The former work he read publicly at Oxford on his return; it was a great occasion: we must tell it in his own words. "When the work was finished, not wishing to hide his candle under a bushel, but wishing to place it in a candlestick, so that it might give light, he resolved to read it before a vast audience at Oxford, where scholars in England chiefly flourished and excelled in scholarship. And as there were three divisions in the work, and each division occupied a day, the readings lasted three successive days. On the first day, he received and entertained at his lodgings all the poor people of the town; on the second, all the doctors of the different faculties and their best students; and on the third, the rest of the students and the chief men of

the town. It was a costly and noble act; and neither present nor past time can furnish any record of such a solemnity having ever taken place in England."

In 1188 he accompanied the Archbishop of Canterbury in his tour through Wales to preach the Third Crusade. With this we shall deal later.

He was abroad with Henry II. at the time of the old king's death, and has left a valuable account of his later years in the book "On the Instruction of Princes." His connection with the Court gave him opportunities for studying the great characters of the time at close quarters, and we have from his pen graphic sketches of many of them. Take this description of Henry II.: "He had a reddish complexion, rather dark, and a large round head. His eyes were gray, bloodshot, and flashed in anger. He had a fiery face; his voice was shaky; he had a deep chest, and long muscular arms, his great round head hanging somewhat forward. He had an enormous belly—though not from gross feeding. Indeed he was temperate in all things, for a prince. To keep down his corpulency,

he took immoderate exercise. Even in times of peace he took no rest—hunting furiously all day, and on his return home in the evening seldom sitting down either before or after supper; for in spite of his own fatigue, he would weary out the Court by being constantly on his legs."

The whole is very interesting and full of life. It occurs in the "Conquest of Ireland," and is quoted in several of his other works. Gerald's favourite author was Gerald of Barry, Archdeacon of Brecon.

The next important episode in his life was the struggle for St. David's (1198–1203). It was really a fight for the independence of the Welsh Church from England and its direct dependence on the Pope. Gerald was elected bishop by the canons of St. David's, in opposition to the will of King John (whose consent was necessary) and of Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury (whose rights as metropolitan were attacked). Gerald hastened off to Rome to get the Pope's support, taking with him the most precious offering that he could think of —six of his own books; for Rome had

a bad name for bribery—and who could resist such a bribe? But he found it advisable to supplement his books by other promises, especially by the offer to the Pope of tithes from Wales.

The Pope at this time was Innocent III. —the greatest of all the Popes—who brought kings and nations under his feet and held despotic sway over the Universal Church, and stamped out heresy in blood. In the references to him in Gerald's works he appears in much more human guise. We see him after supper unbending and laughing at Gerald's anecdotes and cracking jokes of a somewhat risky character with the archdeacon. It is clear that the Pope thoroughly enjoyed the Welshman's company, but also that he did not take him very seriously as an ecclesiastical statesman. "Let us have some more stories about your archbishop's bad Latin," he would say, when Gerald was getting too urgent on the independence of the Welsh Church or his own right to the see of St. David's.

This archbishop was Hubert Walter, who was much more of a secular adminis-

trator than an ecclesiastic, and whose Latin though clear and ready might show a fine contempt for all rules of grammar. Gerald was a stickler for correct Latin grammar; he is great on "howlers." There is one of his stories, illustrating both the avarice of the Norman prelates and the ignorance of the Welsh clergy: A Welsh priest came to his bishop and said, "I have brought your lordship a present of two hundred *oves*." He meant "*ova*"; but the bishop insisted on the sheep; and the priest probably rubbed up his Latin grammar. Gerald had also other patriotic reasons for his hostility to the archbishop, who as chief justiciary—*i.e.*, chief minister of the king — had recently attacked and defeated the Welsh between the Wye and the Severn. "Blessed be God," writes Gerald sarcastically to him, "who has taught your hands to war and your fingers to fight, for since the days when Harold almost exterminated the nation, no prince has destroyed so many Welshmen in one battle as your Grace."

Gerald continued the struggle till 1203, though deserted by the Welsh clergy.

"The laity of Wales," he said, "stood by me; but of the clergy whose battle I was fighting, scarce one." He was proclaimed as a rebel, and had some narrow escapes of imprisonment or worse—escapes which he owed to his ready wit and which he delights to tell. At last he gave way, and during the remainder of his life we find him at Rome, Lincoln, St. David's, revising his works and writing new ones, modifying some of his judgments (especially that on Hubert Walter), and encouraging Stephen Langton in the great struggle against John. He was buried at St. David's, probably in 1223.

We will now return to the "Itinerary through Wales" and the "Description of Wales." Jerusalem was taken by Saladin in 1187, and the Third Crusade—the Crusade of Richard Cœur de Lion—was preached throughout Europe. In 1188 Archbishop Baldwin made a preaching tour through Wales accompanied by Glanville, the great justiciary of Henry II., and Gerald of Barry. While the primary object was the preaching of the Crusade, the king had an eye to business and saw

that the Holy Cause could be utilised for other purposes; it gave an opportunity for the assertion of the metropolitan rights of Canterbury over the Welsh Church, and for a survey of the country by the royal officials, which was not possible under other circumstances. That is why the archbishop and the justiciar accompanied the expedition. It is remarkable that Gerald, the champion of the Welsh Church, should have given his support to it; but he had not fully adopted the patriotic attitude of his later years; and, with him as with most people of the time, the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre was, in theory at any rate, the greatest object in the world; while further, we must not forget that the journey had many attractions for him as an author; it gave him "copy" for a new book, and the chance of reading his Irish Topography to the archbishop. Every day during the journey the archbishop listened to a portion of this book, and at the end took it home to finish. As the journey lasted at least fifty days, one may calculate that it took at most an average of three

pages a day to send the archbishop to sleep.

The Itinerary (which was later dedicated to Stephen Langton) contains in the author's words an account of "the difficult places through which we passed, the names of springs and torrents, the witty sayings, the toils and incidents of the journey, the memorable events of ancient and modern times, and the natural history and description of the country."

The route pursued was as follows: From Hereford to Radnor, Brecon, Abergavenny, Caerleon, Newport, Cardiff, Llandaff, Ewenny, Margam, Swansea, Kidweli, Carmarthen, Haverford, St. David's, Cardigan, Strata Florida, thence keeping close to the coast, through Bangor and Chester; and then south by Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, to Hereford.

The travellers were well received and entertained both by the Lords Marcher and the Welsh princes. It was especially to the Welsh that their attention was directed, and Welsh princes accompanied them through their territories. The chief was Rhys ap Gruffydd (Gerald's uncle),

prince of South Wales, who was then at the height of his power, and had been made chief justice of South Wales by Henry II., to whom he faithfully adhered. Gwynedd and Powys were then divided among several heirs. One of the princes of Powys, Owain Cyfeiliog, the poet, was distinguished as being the only prince who did not come to meet the archbishop with his people; for which he was excommunicated. Gerald notes that he was an adherent of Henry II., and was "conspicuous for the good management of his territory." Perhaps that is why he would not have anything to do with the Crusade.

How far was the expedition successful in its primary object in gaining crusaders? The archbishop and justiciar had already taken the cross; they remained true to their vows and went to the Holy Land, the archbishop dying at the siege of Acre, heartbroken at the wickedness of the army. Gerald himself was the first to take the cross in Wales, not acting under the influence of religious enthusiasm, but (as he says himself) "impelled by the urgent requests and promises of the king

and persuasions of the archbishop," who wanted him to act as historian; but Gerald, after setting the example, bought a dispensation and did not go. A number of the lesser Welsh princes soon took the cross. The Lord Rhys himself was eager to do so, but "his wife by female artifices diverted him wholly from his noble purpose." The wives were all dead against the whole affair. At Hay the wives caught hold of their husbands, and the would-be Crusaders had literally to run away from them to the castle, leaving their cloaks behind them. A nobler spirit of self-sacrifice was shown by the old woman of Cardigan, who, when her only son took the cross, said: "O most beloved Lord Jesus Christ, I give Thee hearty thanks for having conferred on me the blessing of bringing forth a son worthy of Thy service." This son was probably worth more than the twelve archers of the castle of St. Clears who were forcibly signed with the cross for committing a murder; and one may reasonably look with suspicion on the sudden conversion of "many of the most notorious murderers and robbers of the

neighbourhood" at Usk. It was this kind of thing that turned the Holy Land into a sort of convict settlement.

The preachers clearly worked hard and had some trying experiences, and kept up their spirits by little jokes, which Gerald retails. They nearly came to grief in quicksands at the mouth of the river Neath. "Terrible hard country this," said one of the monks next day in the castle at Swansea. "Some people are never satisfied," retorted his companion; "you were complaining of its being too soft in the quicksand yesterday." The mountains were trying to men no longer in their youth; after toiling up one the archbishop sank exhausted on a fallen tree and said to his panting companions, "Can any one enliven the company by whistling a tune?" "Which," adds Gerald, "is not very easily done by people out of breath." From whistling the conversation passed to nightingales, which some one said were never found in Wales. "Wise bird, the nightingale," remarked the archbishop.

One serious difficulty they had was that none of them, not even Gerald, knew

Welsh sufficiently well to preach in it, though they generally had interpreters. The archbishop, who would sometimes preach away for hours without result, felt this much more than Gerald. He declares he moved crowds to tears though they did not understand a word of what he was saying. But one may take the words of Prince Rhys's fool as evidence (if any were needed) that ignorance of Welsh weakened the effect. "You owe a great debt, Rhys, to your kinsman the archdeacon, who has taken a hundred or so of your men to serve the Lord; if he had only spoken in Welsh, you wouldn't have had a soul left."

In all about three thousand took the cross; but the Crusade was delayed, zeal cooled, and it is probable that comparatively few went. The *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* mentions, I think, only one exploit by a Welshman in the Third Crusade; he was an archer, and so a South Walian.

This brings me to one of the incidental notes of great value scattered about the Itinerary. Speaking of the siege of Abergavenny (1182), Gerald tells us that

the men of Gwent and Glamorgan excelled all others in the use of the bow, and gives curious evidence of the strength of their shooting. Thus the arrows pierced an oak door four inches thick; they had been left there as a curiosity, and Gerald saw them with their iron points coming through on the inner side. He describes these bows as "made of elm—ugly, unfinished-looking weapons, but astonishingly stiff, large, and strong, and equally useful for long and short shooting." Add to this that the longbow was not a characteristic English weapon till the latter part of the thirteenth century, that the first battle in which an English king made effective use of archery (at Falkirk, 1298), his infantry consisted mainly of Welshmen; and there can be little doubt that the famous longbow of England, which won the victories of Creçy and Poitiers and Agincourt, and indirectly did much to destroy feudalism and villenage, had its home in South Wales.

Gerald was also a keen observer of nature, and his knowledge of the ways of animals is extensive and peculiar. Perhaps

even more marked is his love of the supernatural; he could believe anything, if it was only wonderful enough—except Geoffrey of Monmouth's History. But I must confine myself to one story—the story of the boy in Gower who (as the root of learning is bitter) played truant and found two little men of pigmy stature, and went with them to their country under the earth, and played games with golden balls with the fairy prince. These little folk were very small—of fair complexion, and long luxuriant hair; and they had horses and dogs to suit their size. They hated nothing so much as lies; "they had no form of public worship, being lovers and reverers, it seemed, of truth." The boy often went, till he tried to steal a golden ball, and then he could never find fairyland again. But he learnt some of the fairy language, which was like Greek. And then Gerald compares words in different languages, and notes how, for instance, the same word for *salt* runs through Greek and British and Irish and Latin and French and English and German, and the fairy language, which suggests a close relation

between all these peoples in past ages. It is very modern; and it is not without reason that Gerald has been called "the father of comparative philology."

In his "Description of Wales" Gerald describes the manner of life and characteristics of the people. All are trained to arms, and when the trumpet sounds the alarm, the husbandman rushes as eagerly from his plough as the courtier from his court. Agricultural work takes up little of their time, as they are still mainly in a pastoral stage, living on the produce of their herds, and eating more meat than bread. They fight and undergo hardships and willingly sacrifice their lives for their country and for liberty. They wear little defensive armour, and depend mainly on their mobility; they are not much good at a close engagement, but generally victors in a running fight, relying more on their activity than on their strength.

It was the fashion to keep open house for all comers. "Those who arrive in the morning are entertained till evening with the conversation of young women and the music of the harp; for each house has its

young women and harps allotted for the purpose. In each family the art of playing on the harp is held preferable to any other learning; and no nation is so free from jealousy as the Welsh." After a simple supper (for the people are not addicted to gluttony or drunkenness), "a bed of rushes is placed along the side of the hall, and all in common lie down to sleep with their feet towards the fire. They sleep in the thin cloak and tunic they wear by day. They receive much comfort from the natural heat of the persons lying near them; but when the underside begins to be tired with the hardness of the bed, or the upper one to suffer from the cold, they get up and go to the fire; and then returning to the couch they expose their sides alternately to the cold and to the hardness of the bed."

Gifted with an acute and rich intellect they excel in whatever studies they pursue, notably in music. They are especially famous for their part-singing, "so that in a company of singers, which one very often meets with in Wales, you will hear as many different parts and voices as there

are performers," (!) and this gift has by long habit become natural to the nation.

"They show a greater respect than other nations to churches and ecclesiastics, to the relics of saints, bells, holy books, and the cross; and hence their churches enjoy more than common tranquillity."

He then goes on to the other side of the picture: "for history without truth becomes undeserving of its name." "These people are no less light in mind than in body, and by no means to be relied on. They are easily urged to undertake any action, and as easily checked from prosecuting it. . . . They never scruple at taking a false oath for the sake of any temporary advantage. . . . Above all other peoples they are given to removing their neighbours' landmarks. Hence arise quarrels, murders, conflagrations, and frequent fratricides. It is remarkable that brothers show more affection to each other when dead than when living; for they persecute the living even unto death, but avenge the dead with all their power."

Finally, as a scientific observer of politics, he discusses how Wales may be conquered

and governed, and how the Welsh may resist.

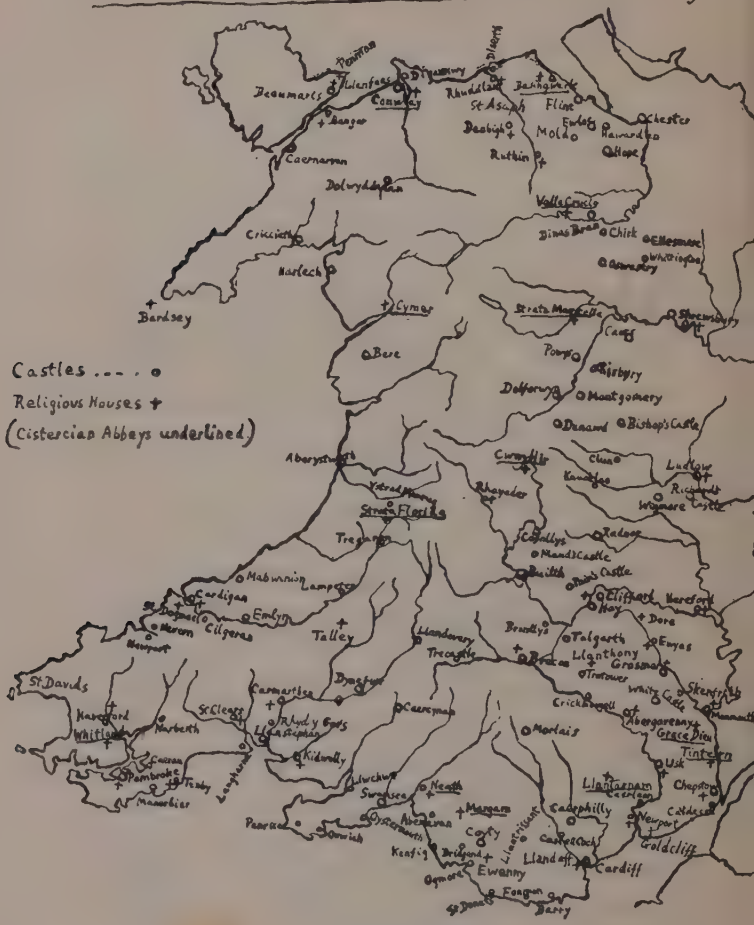
A prince who would subdue this people must give his whole energies to the task for at least a whole year. He must divide their strength, and by bribes and promises endeavour to stir up one against the other, knowing the spirit of hatred and envy which generally prevails among them. He must cut off supplies, build castles, and use light-armed troops and plenty of them; for though many English mercenaries perish in a battle, money will procure as many more; but to the Welsh the loss is for the time irreparable. He recommends that all the English inhabitants of the Marches should be trained to arms; for the Welsh fight for liberty and only a free people can subdue them. His advice to the Welsh is: Unite. "If they would be inseparable, they would be insuperable, being assisted by these three circumstances—a country well defended by nature, a people contented to live upon little, a community whose nobles and commoners alike are trained in the use of arms; and especially as the English fight for power,

the Welsh for liberty; the English hirelings for money, the Welsh patriots for their country."

I hope I may persuade some who do not yet know Gerald to make his acquaintance, and to read either his works on Ireland and Wales, translated in Bohn's library, or Mr. Henry Owen's brilliant and delightful volume, "Gerald the Welshman," my indebtedness to which I wish to acknowledge. Gerald tells us many miracles; but he has himself performed a miracle as wonderful as any he relates; he has kept all the charm and freshness of youth for more than seven hundred years.

CASTLES

CASTLES & RELIGIOUS HOUSES (12th & 13th Centuries)



IV

CASTLES

WALES is pre-eminently the land of castles. There are between thirty and forty in Glamorgan alone. The accompanying map, though it is by no means exhaustive, shows the general lie of the castles, which may be divided into three groups, having as their respective bases Chester, Shrewsbury, and Gloucester. But though there is some evidence of an organised plan for the conquest of Wales in the time of William Rufus, it is useless to look for any great and general system of offence or defence, because most of the castles were not built by a centralised government with any such object in view, but by individuals to guard their own territories and protect their independence against either their neighbours or the English king. The great age of castle-

building was between 1100 and 1300. Castles play a very small part in the fighting in Wales till end of the eleventh century. Before that time indeed there were few stone castles anywhere ; the usual type, even of the early Norman castles, was a moated mound surrounded by wooden palisades. One hears for instance of a castle being built by William the Conqueror in eight days. An example of this early type of fortress was Pembroke Castle at the end of the eleventh century, "a slender fortress of stakes and turf," which had the good fortune to be in charge of Gerald of Windsor, grandfather of Giraldus Cambrensis. It stood several sieges, which shows that the siege engines of the Welsh were of a very poor and primitive type. One of these sieges was turned into a blockade, and the garrison was nearly reduced by starvation. The constable had recourse to a time-honoured ruse. "With great prudence he caused four hogs which still remained to be cut into small pieces and thrown down among the enemy. The next day he had recourse to a more refined stratagem : he contrived

that a letter from him should fall into the hands of the enemy stating that there was no need for assistance for the next four months." The besiegers were taken in and dispersed to their homes.

The characteristic types of castles in the twelfth century were the rectangular keep and the shell keep; in the thirteenth the concentric castle. Of the two last we have splendid examples in Cardiff and Caerphilly. Of rectangular keeps there are very few in Wales—Chepstow is the only important one—though there are several on the borders, notably Ludlow. The square keep seems to us most characteristic of Norman military architecture; the Tower of London, Rochester, Newcastle, Castle Rising, are well-known examples, and there are many more in a good state of preservation; there are many more solid square keeps than shell keeps well preserved, but this is simply due to the greater solidity of the former; the shell keeps were far more numerous in the twelfth century; and the reasons for this are obvious—the rectangular keep was much more expensive to build, and it was too heavy to erect on

the artificial mounds on which the Norman architects generally founded their castles.

The keep of Cardiff Castle is one of the most perfect shell keeps in existence. It is built on a round artificial mound, surrounded by a wide and deep moat—the mound and moat being, of course, complements of each other. Such mounds and moats are common in all parts of England, and in Normandy. They are not Roman, nor British, nor are they, as Mr. G. T. Clark maintained, characteristic of Anglo-Saxon work. They are essentially Norman, and a good representation of the making of such a mound may be seen in the Bayeux Tapestry, under the heading—'He orders them to dig a castle.' When was the Cardiff mound made? Perhaps the short entry in the Brut gives the answer: "1080, the building of Cardiff began." It would then be surrounded by wooden palisades, and surmounted by a timber structure, as a newly made mound would not stand the masonry. The shell keep was probably built by Robert of Gloucester, and it was probably in the gatehouse of this keep, that Robert of

Normandy was imprisoned. A shell keep was a ring wall eight or ten feet thick, about thirty feet high, not covered in, and enclosing an open courtyard, round which were placed the buildings—light structures, often wooden sheds, abutting on the ring wall—such as one may see now in the courtyard of Castell Coch. The shell keep was the centre of Robert's castle, but not the whole. From this time, dated the great outer walls on the south and west—walls forty feet high and ten feet thick and solid throughout. The north and east and part of the south sides of the castle precincts are enclosed by banks of earth, beneath which, the walls of a Roman camp have recently been discovered. These banks were capped by a slight embattled wall. Outside along the north, south and east fronts was a moat, formerly fed by the Taff through the Mill leat stream which ran along the west front. The present lodgings, or habitable part of the castle built on either side of the great west wall, date mostly from the fifteenth century. The earlier lodgings were, perhaps, on the same site—though only inside the wall; a

great lord did not as a rule live in the keep, except in times of danger.

The area of the enclosure is about ten acres—more suited to a Roman garrison than to a lord marcher of the twelfth century. That the castle was difficult to guard is shown by the success of Ivor Bach's bold dash, *c.* 1153-1158. Ivor ap Meyric was Lord of Senghennydd, holding it of William of Gloucester, the Lord of Glamorgan, and, perhaps, had his head-quarters in the fortress above the present Castell Coch. "He was," says Giraldus Cambrensis, "after the manner of the Welsh, owner of a tract of mountain land, of which the earl was trying to deprive him. At that time the Castle of Cardiff was surrounded with high walls, guarded by 120 men at arms, a numerous body of archers and a strong watch. Yet in defiance of all this, Ivor, in the dead of night secretly scaled the walls, seized the earl and countess and their only son, and carried them off to the woods; and did not release them till he had recovered all that had been unjustly taken from him," and a goodly ransom in addition. Perhaps the

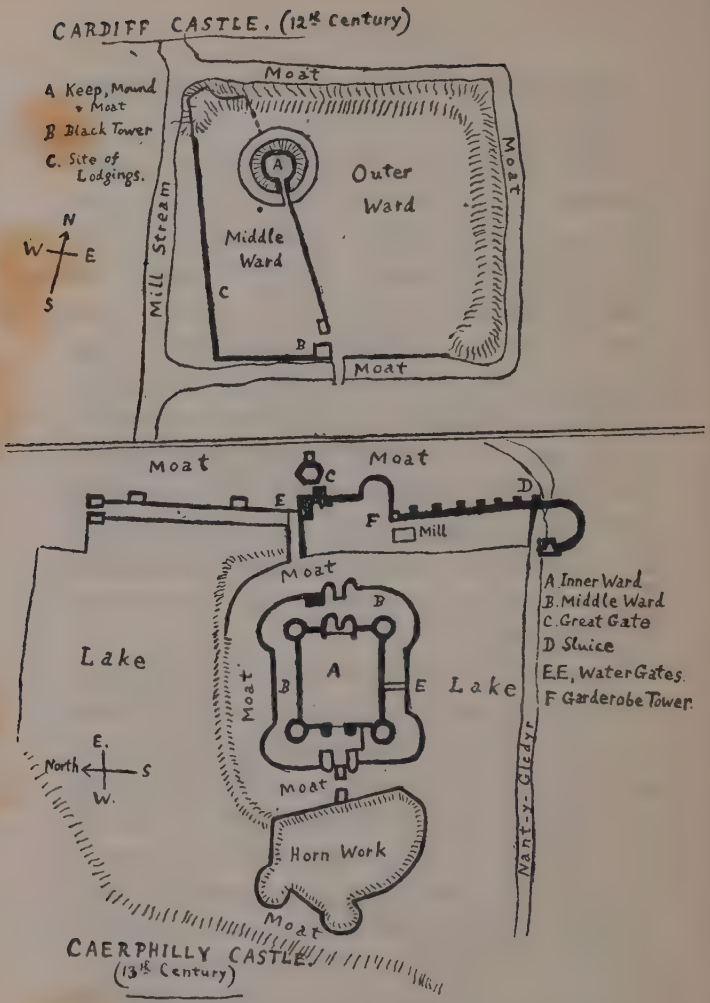
most permanent result of this episode was the building of a wall 30 feet high between the keep and the Black Tower—dividing the castle enclosure into two parts and forming an inner or middle ward of less extent, and less liable to danger from such sudden raids.

Cardiff Castle was much more than a place of defence; it was the seat of government. The bailiff of the Castle was *ex officio* mayor of the town in the Middle Ages. The Castle was also the head and centre of the Lordship of Glamorgan. This was divided into two parts—the shire fee or body, and the members. The shire fee was the southern part; under a sheriff appointed by the chief Lord: the chief landowners owed suit and service—*i.e.*, they attended and were under the jurisdiction of the shire court held monthly in the castle enclosure, and each owed a fixed amount of military service—especially the duty of "castle-guard"—supplying the garrison and keeping the castle in repair. There are indications of the work of the shire court in some of the castle accounts

published in the Cardiff Records, *e.g.*, in 1316, an official accounts for 1d., the price of "a cord bought for the hanging of thieves adjudged in the county court: stipend of one man hanging those thieves 4d." The "members" consisted of ten lordships (several of which were in the hands of Welsh nobles): these were much more independent; each had its own court (with powers of life and death), from which an appeal lay to the Lord's court at Cardiff: generally they owed no definite service to the Lord (except homage, and sometimes a heriot at death), but on failure of heirs the estate lapsed to the chief Lord. At Cardiff Castle the Lord had his chancery, like the royal chancery on a small scale—issuing writs, recording services and grants of privileges, and legal decisions: practically the whole of these records have been lost—and our knowledge of the organisation of the Lordship is mainly derived from the royal records at times, when owing to minority or escheat, the Lordship was under royal administration. The Lord of Glamorgan owed homage, but no service to the king;

and (though this was sometimes disputed by his tenants and the royal lawyers), no appeal lay from his courts to the king's court. The machinery of government was probably more complete and elaborate in Glamorgan than in any other Marcher Lordship.

Caerphilly Castle had not the political importance of Cardiff, but far surpasses it as a fortress. By the strength and position of Caerphilly, one may measure the power of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd after the Barons' War and before the accession of Edward I. The Prince of Wales had extended his sway down as far as Brecon, and Welshmen everywhere were looking to him as the restorer of their country's independence. Among them was the Welsh Lord of Senghenydd, one of the chief "members" of Glamorgan, and his overlord probably saw reason to suspect his loyalty. An alliance between him and Llywelyn would open the lower Taff Valley to the Welsh prince and give him command of the hill country north of Cardiff. It was on the lands of the lord of Senghenydd that Gilbert de Clare, Earl


CARDIFF CASTLE. (12th Century)
A Keep, Mound & Moat
B Black Tower
C. Site of Lodgings.
N
W
E
S
Moat
Outer Ward
Middle Ward
Mill Stream
Moat
Moat
A
B
C
Moat
Moat
Moat
C
D
E
F
Mill
Moat
Lake
Lake
Moat
Moat
A
B
D
E
E.
North
S
W.
Horn Work
Moat
Nant-y-Gledyr
A Inner Ward
B. Middle Ward
C. Great Gate
D Sluice
E.E, Water Gates.
F Garderobe Tower.
CAERPHILLY CASTLE
(13th Century)

of Gloucester, built Castell Coch and Caerphilly.

Caerphilly is described by the latest historian of the Art of War as the grandest specimen of its class; it represents the high-water mark of mediæval military architecture in this country, and was the model of Edward I.'s great castles in the north. It illustrates the influence of the Crusades on Western Europe, being an instance of the "concentric" system of defences, of which the walls of Constantinople afford the most magnificent example, and which the Crusaders adopted in many of their great fortresses in the East.

Caerphilly Castle consists of three lines of defences, and the way in which these supplement each other shows that the work in all essentials was designed as a great whole; it did not grow up bit by bit. There are of course many evidences of alterations and rebuilding at later times; the buildings in the middle ward, on the south side, seem to be later additions; the hall appears to have been enlarged, and the tracery of the windows suggests the

fourteenth century ; the state-rooms to the west of the hall have been much altered ; but such alterations as appear are confined to the habitable part of the castle, and do not affect it as a military work. It has been suggested that the castle may have been greatly enlarged in the latter years of Edward II., when it played an important part in connection with the division of the Gloucester inheritance and the younger Despenser's ambitions. There are a number of notices of the castle in the chronicles and public records of that time, but apparently no references to any building operations. And the unity of plan is evidence that the whole dated from the same time.

The castle is built on a tongue of gravel nearly surrounded by low, marshy land, forming a sort of peninsula ; a stream on the south running eastwards to the Rhymny ; and two springs on the north. By damming these waters and cutting through the tongue of gravel an artificial island was secured for the site of the castle. The inner ward, or central part of the castle, consists of a quadrangle

with a large round tower at each corner : in the centre of the east and west side are massive gate-houses defended by portcullises ; from the projecting corner towers all the intervening wall was commanded. The gateways communicate with the second line of defence or middle ward. This completely encircles the inner ward, on a much lower level ; it is a narrow space bounded by a wall, with low, semi-circular bastions at the corners ; it is commanded at every point from the inner ward ; the narrowness of the space would prevent the concentration of large bodies of assailants or the use of battering-rams, and communication is at several points stopped by walls or buildings jutting out from the inner ward. The middle ward had strong gate-houses at the east and west ends, and was completely surrounded by water—east and west by a moat, north and south the moat widens into lakes : note how on the north a narrow ridge of gravel has been used to ensure a water moat on that side, in case there was not enough water to flood the whole lake. These lakes form part

of the third line of defence or outer ward, which includes also on the west the "horn-work" and on the east the grand front. The horn-work is about three acres in extent, surrounded by a wall 15 feet high, which is of the nature of an escarpment, the ground rising above it. It is entirely surrounded by a moat, and connected with the middle ward on one side and the mainland on the other by drawbridges. It would probably be used for grazing purposes, and thus would be of great value to the garrison; but so far as the actual defences of the castle are concerned, a lake would have been much more effective; the nature of the ground would however have prevented this. The horn-work was intended to cover the only side upon which the castle was open to an attack from level ground, and to occupy what would otherwise have been a dangerous platform.

The eastern side of the outer ward—the grand front—is a most imposing structure. It is a wall about 250 yards long, and in some parts 60 feet high, furnished with buttresses and projecting towers from

which the intervening spaces are easily commanded, culminating in the great gate-house near the centre, and terminating at both ends in clusters of towers which protect the sally-ports. On the outside is a moat spanned by a double draw-bridge. The northern part of this front, which was probably occupied by stables, would in dry weather be the least defensible part of the castle; but it was cut off from the rest by an embattled wall running from the gate-house to the inner moat and pierced only by one small and portcullised gate. The southern half was more important and stronger. It crossed the stream at the dam, the walls being 15 feet thick where subjected to the pressure of the water, and the strong group of towers at the end—on the other side of the stream—guarded the dam on which the safety of the castle largely depended; the wall and towers here form a semicircle, curving back into the edge of the lake, so as to avoid the danger of being outflanked.

On the inside of the grand front were various buildings, such as the mill. This

eastern line was divided from the middle ward by a moat 45 feet wide—a space which is too wide to be spanned by a single drawbridge, and as there are no signs of the foundations of a central pier, it seems probable that the bridge rested on a wooden support, which could be removed when necessary, and the assailants plunged into the moat below.

There are a large number of interesting details connected with both the military functions of the castle and its domestic economy. There were at least four exits (not counting the two water-gates); this would give the garrison opportunities of harassing assailants by sallies, and would make a much larger army necessary in order to blockade the castle; contrast the single narrow entrance to the Norman keep—high up in the wall and visible to all outside. The water-gates are worth studying, especially the methods of protecting the eastern water-gate—two grates with a shoot above and between them. One should notice, too, the "splaying" of the outer wall, by which missiles from the top would be projected outwards; and also the

use of the mill-stream to carry away the refuse of the garderobe tower. And there are many other points, to which one would like to call attention, if time allowed.

The history of Caerphilly in the Middle Ages need not detain us long. It was besieged by Llywelyn in 1271, while it was being built. Llywelyn declared he could have taken it in three days if he had not been persuaded to submit the dispute to the arbitration of the king. It is clear that the castle was not finished; shortly after this Gilbert de Clare obtained license from the king to "enditch" the castle: such license was not, as a rule, required in the Marches (as it was in England) and was only necessary now because the king was acting as arbitrator. The Earl of Gloucester kept possession. We next hear of it in 1315, when it resisted the attack of Llywelyn Bren. It was then in the hands of the king, pending the division of the Gloucester inheritance among the three co-heiresses. In 1318 Caerphilly, with the rest of Glamorgan, was granted to the younger Despenser, who perhaps

enlarged the hall and made the other alterations referred to above. Edward II. was there for a few days when flying for his life; had he trusted to Caerphilly, instead of fleeing further through South Wales, he might have saved his head and his crown; at any rate, there would have been a great siege to add to the history of mediæval warfare. The king's adherents held out in Caerphilly for months, and only surrendered when, the king being dead, there was nothing more to fight for, and they were allowed to go free. Happy is the castle which has no history. The perfection of Caerphilly as a fortress saved it from serious attacks.

In conclusion, I will give two illustrations of the relations between the garrison of a castle and those outside. The first refers to Swansea. There is a curious Charter of King John to the good men of Swansea, in which he releases them from the "custom of eating" forced on them by the men of the castle. This would be a solid variation of the liquid scot-ales or free drinks which officials and garrisons were in the habit of exact-

ing from their neighbours, and which were among the most persistent grievances in the Middle Ages.

The second concerns Builth, and is taken from the Patent Rolls of Edward II. in 1315. Builth was then in the hands of the king, to whom the townsfolk appeal for redress of grievances. The community complain that, though they are only bound to carry timber to the castle twice a week, they are often forced to carry it three times a week and more, and victuals too; and the men of the castle compel them to plough their lands and cut their corn, and hold them to ransom if they refuse; and they carry away from the houses of the said complainants divers kind of victuals—lambs, geese, hens, &c.—and pay only one quarter of their value, or nothing at all; and though the complainants gave the keeper of the castle £120 that they might be free from such oppressions, he took the money and oppresses them just the same. Further, the courts which the people have to attend are multiplied; and recently the court was held at a time when so great

a flood had happened that neither horsemen nor footmen could approach the court, and so thirty-six men and women, fearing the cruelty of the bailiffs, entered a boat and were overwhelmed in the rush of the river. And one night men of the castle, maliciously seeking occasion against the commonalty of the town, went out of the castle and pretended to besiege it and shot arrows at it; and then secretly re-entered the castle and declared the townsfolk had been attacking the castle. And on this account many burgesses were imprisoned in the castle and ill-treated, and their swine maliciously killed. And things are so intolerable that many of the greater burgesses have left the country, and the residue, without speedy remedy, cannot remain.

Life was evidently dull in a castle: one had to play practical jokes to relieve the monotony; and life was anything but pleasant outside a castle. The castles of Wales are much more attractive to us to-day than they were to those who lived in them or round them six or seven hundred years ago.

RELIGIOUS HOUSES

V

RELIGIOUS HOUSES

IN speaking of the Religious Houses in Wales I shall deal with those which flourished in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—the period we have hitherto been studying—though it is tempting to go back to the glories of the old Welsh monasteries of the sixth century, such as Llantwit Major and Bangor Iscoed, whose dim memories must always exercise a strong fascination. The monasteries of this early type had fallen on evil days in Wales, as in Ireland and elsewhere, before the twelfth century, many had been wiped out by the Danes; and those that remained seem to have lost the spirit of life (save in a few distant islands or inaccessible mountains), and made no struggle for existence against the vigorous invasion of the new monasticism.

We shall be concerned with two kinds of religious houses—namely, the houses of monks and the houses of friars. And, first, let us consider in briefest outline the main course of development of the religious orders in the Roman Church. The Rule of St. Benedict (†541) was adopted by all monks: the essential features of it were prayer, labour, silence, a common life and common property. But among the early Benedictines each monastery was independent and self-governing, though an abbey might have priories in some measure connected with it. The result was that in the course of time the discipline and life of monasteries varied infinitely; and there was no co-operation for self-defence among the various monasteries. Hence in the tenth century arose the Cluniac order—the first attempt at organisation—the Abbot of Clugny became head of a vast number of monasteries in different countries of Europe; the priors of these owed allegiance to the Abbot of Clugny, were appointed by him, and paid revenues to the head abbey and the general fund of the Order. This organisation was thus mon-

archical—despotic; the Abbot of Clugny was a pope of monasticism. The movement acquired enormous influence on the Church as a whole, getting control of the papacy, insisting that the Church should be independent of the State, and that celibacy of the clergy should be practically enforced. But the Cluniacs instead of withdrawing from the world began to dominate it, losing many of the essential features of monasticism. Hence another reform movement arose about 1100, that of the Cistercian Order, which is associated with the name of St. Bernard. This aimed at reviving the Benedictine rule in all its strictness, insisting especially on manual labour. Cistercian houses were founded in desolate places, as far removed from populous centres as possible. But the Order differed from the early Benedictines in organisation. Each Cistercian house was independent and self-governing, electing its own abbot; but all the abbots were bound to come together at stated times for general assemblies or chapters, and these general assemblies were the supreme governing body in the Order. Thus unity was

established; the organisation was close, but not monarchical; the Order was a great federation. This is the highest point reached in monastic development.

But about the time of the Crusades another ideal made itself felt. Hitherto the religious man withdrew from the world: but, as an old chronicler put it, "God found out the Crusades as a way to reconcile religion and the world"—was it not possible to serve God *in* the world? The knight did it; he went on fighting, but he fought for the Holy Sepulchre. The Military Orders (Templars and Hospitallers) combined the life of a monk with the life of a soldier. The Regular or Augustinian Canons combined the life of a monk with the life of a parish priest. And this ideal—new to the Middle Ages—received its highest realisation in the Dominican and Franciscan friars. The monk left the world in order to become religious; the friar aimed at making the world religious. The monk's main object was to save his own soul; the friar's, to save the souls of others.

We will now turn to the monasteries in

Wales. Of the older Benedictine houses there were about fifteen, almost all in South Wales, and all except one were not abbeys but priories, or cells, *i.e.*, they were dependent on some abbey elsewhere. A number of them belonged to some foreign abbey, especially the earliest. This was the case with the Priory of Monmouth, founded by the Breton Wihenoc, which belonged to the Abbey of St. Florence of Saumur (Anjou); and this was the case too with the priories of Abergavenny and Pembroke. These "alien priories" were simply used by the abbeys abroad as sources of revenue; they were foreign, unpopular, and during the French war in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries most of them were suppressed and their revenues appropriated by the Crown. The same applies to the three Cluniac cells established in Wales, such as St. Clears, which seems only to have contained the prior and one monk, who did not live with much strictness, though Gerald of Barry says the Cluniacs here were better than they were abroad, and not nearly so bad as the Cistercians. The life of monks in

these outlying cells, where they were not under any supervision, and where there was no "public opinion" of the monastery to keep them straight, was generally very lax; they lived liked laymen, looking after the estates (generally wasting them), and without much regard to their vows: "they lived like beasts," says Gerald. Thus the Lord Rhys had to eject the monks from one cell, because of the charges brought against them by the fathers and husbands of the surrounding district, who declared that they would leave and go to England if the evil was not stopped.

Another class of houses were those founded as priories or cells of English abbeys. Thus the Priory at Brecon was a cell of Battle Abbey, founded by Bernard of Newmarch, and largely endowed by the Braoses; Ewenny, founded by Maurice de Londres, was a cell to St. Peter's, Gloucester. All these of course, like the alien priories, were founded by the Norman conquerors, and for two purposes: Firstly, for the souls of the founder and his family, a very necessary provision; the Normans were in their way a devout people and

made sacrifices to win the favour of heaven. William de Braose used to give his clerks "something extra" for inserting pious expressions in his legal documents. Secondly, these houses also served as castles and stations for garrisons. Take, for instance, Ewenny; it is much more like a castle than a religious house, with its great embattled walls and towers, and magnificent gate-house furnished with a triple portcullis and "shoots," or holes in the roof above for pouring molten lead on the assailants' heads. The De Londres family were businesslike as well as pious; Ewenny's prime object was to help them to gain heaven, it also helped them to gain the earth. The close and constant connection which these houses maintained with their mother abbeys in England and abroad always kept them Anglo-Norman in sympathies—foreign garrisons. But while recognising this aspect of the monastic houses in Wales, one must avoid exaggerating it, as, *e.g.*, Mr. Willis Bund does. He regards all the monasteries as founded solely with this political object: "to represent," he says, "a Welsh prince as

founder of a religious house in South Wales after 1066 is representing him as the worst of traitors. Bad as the Welsh chieftains were, even they would have hesitated to introduce into their country what were really Norman garrisons;" and he rejects the idea of a Welsh prince founding Strata Florida. Now these remarks are only applicable to those religious houses which were dependencies on some English or foreign abbey; they do not apply to the Cistercian monasteries, all of which were practically equal and self-governing; each elected its own head and was not under foreign dictation. While the whole Cistercian Order formed an united body for purposes of monastic life and discipline, each abbey identified itself in a very remarkable way with the local or national aspirations of the people round, from whom its monks were drawn. Some of the Cistercian monasteries in Ireland refused to admit any Englishman. Some of the Cistercian abbeys in Wales were the warmest supporters of Welsh independence.

The Welsh princes felt the need of

providing for the safety of their souls just as the Norman barons did, and the souls of both parties needed a great deal of saving. Further, the Welsh were not cut off from the great movements of the world; they felt like every other country in Europe the waves of religious enthusiasm, which resulted in the twelfth century in the spread of the Cistercians, in the thirteenth century in the spread of the friars. In the twelfth century the acts most pleasing to God were generally thought to be taking the Cross and endowing a Cistercian monastery. Again, though many of the Welsh chiefs were mere creatures of impulse, there were others who looked to the future. The Lord Rhys was an acute man of the world, who was not averse to improving his property. He possessed great tracts of mountain land, which was practically worthless; he saw Cistercian monks elsewhere, not exactly making such tracts blossom like the rose, but, at any rate, utilising them for pasture land, keeping flocks of sheep, becoming the great wool-growers for all Europe; why should he

not hand over his worthless property to Cistercians, and by so doing lay up for himself treasure in heaven and on earth? Mr. Willis Bund says, "How unnatural for any Welsh prince to found a Cistercian abbey!" Surely it was the most natural thing in the world.

The Cistercians had far greater influence in Wales than any other monastic order. The Cistercian abbeys were Aberconway, Basingwerk, Valle Crucis, Strata Marcella, Cymer, Strata Florida, Cwm Hir, Whitland, Neath, Margam, Llantarnam, Tintern, Grace Dieu, Dore. We have in Gerald a very unfavourable and prejudiced witness on the Cistercians. He tells with pious horror and human satisfaction the story of the abbot of Strata Marcella, who was a great founder of nunneries, and at length eloped with a nun (he soon repented and came back to his abbey, preferring the bread and water of affliction to the nun). Gerald had a personal grudge against the Cistercians; wanting to raise money he had pawned his library to the monks of Strata Florida, and when he tried to redeem the books they declared they had

bought them, and would not give them up.

The Cistercians certainly drove hard bargains, and insisted on their rights to the uttermost farthing. In reading the history of any of these Cistercian houses—the history, say, of Margam by Mr. Trice Martin—one's first feeling is one of disappointment: it is nearly all about property. When one looks through to find evidences of spiritual influence one finds instead prosecutions for poaching. Did they have schools and teach the youth of the country round? I have found no evidence of it. Why should they? Monks never professed to be learned men or to be teachers. Many were both, but it was a disputed question whether they were not in this contravening their rule. At any rate, it was going outside their duty. Their business was to serve God—to perform divine services—and in the intervals to keep out of mischief by manual labour, and to perform works of charity. Margam was specially famous for this last.

Margam Abbey was founded by Robert of Gloucester, in 1147, and the brother of

St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, the most important man in Europe in his time, came over to arrange about the establishment of the house. It was endowed with lands by both English and Welsh, such as the Earl of Gloucester and the Lord of Senghenydd. William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, granted the monks freedom from toll in all his boroughs in Wales and Ireland. The Braoses gave them the privilege of "buying and selling freely all manner of merchandise without toll" in Gower, and they had the right to all wrecks along the coast near Kenfig. We find the abbot asserting his fishing rights sometimes by excommunicating poachers, sometimes by the more effective method of haling them before the Shire Court at Cardiff and getting them fined 3d. a head. The monks of Margam obtained also a footing in Bristol through the Earls of Gloucester, a great commercial advantage to them for the sale of their wool both in England and abroad.

Their lands and privileges were not always, of course, free gifts. Thus in the twelfth century Gilbert Burdin grants land

to Margam, and in return the abbot gives 20s. to the grantor, a gold coin to his wife, and red shoes to each of his children. In 1325 John Nichol, of Kenfig, gave his property to the abbey in return for a life annuity. He was to receive daily one loaf, two cakes, and a gallon of beer; also 6s. 8d. for wages, four pairs of shoes (price 12d.), a quarter of oats, and pasture for two beasts.

The annual revenue of Margam was returned as 500 marks in 1383, but before that time the abbey had suffered severely from inundations, sea and sand covering whole villages and much of the best property of the house; and the finances were in a bad way. These were improved by grants of the tithes of parish churches—a favourite form of gift to a monastery, but a great scandal. The rectorial tithes were paid to a monastery, while the monks at best put in some under-paid vicar to look after the parish. Generally, wherever there is a vicar instead of a rector in England or Wales the explanation is the appropriation of the tithes by a monastery.

What did Margam do with its income?

The first charge was the support of about forty monks and forty lay brethren. Next there were the construction and keeping in repair of the church and other monastic buildings; and, thirdly, the expense of charity and hospitality. The monasteries were the hotels of the Middle Ages, except that they made no charges, and Margam was celebrated for its hospitality for centuries. Gerald, the enemy of monks, says: "This noble abbey was more celebrated for its charitable deeds than any other of that order in Wales. And as a reward for that abundant charity which the monastery had always, in times of need, exercised towards strangers and the poor, in a season of approaching famine their corn and provisions were divinely increased, like the widow's cruse of oil." Two centuries later we find the Pope bearing witness to the well-known and universal hospitality of the Abbey of Margam. It was placed on the main road between Bristol and Ireland, at a distance from other places of refuge, and so was continually overrun by rich and poor strangers, the poor evidently preponderating. In this connection I will

give one instance of wise charity on the part of these monks from the end of the twelfth century. Hugh, son of Robert of Llancarven, gives the abbey some land in return for "four marks of silver and a young ox, given to him in his great need by the Abbot." The monastery performed some of the services of the modern bank.

Strata Florida presents some different characteristics. Like most Cistercian houses, it lay off the beaten track. It was founded in 1164 by the Lord Rhys, near the site of an older monastery. It was endowed with large expanse of lands, mostly mountain pastures, and the monks soon began building their church and refectory and cloister. The monastery was completed in 1201, when "the monks came to the new church, which had been erected of splendid workmanship." The architectural details of this church are peculiar and almost unique. Mr. S. W. Williams notices especially the large amount of interlacing work in the carving, which one sees in the old Celtic crosses, and which is so characteristic of Celtic art. The convent seems to have become very soon essentially Welsh.

Nearly all the abbots have Welsh names. It was the burial-place of the princes of South Wales; but as they were, after the Lord Rhys, quite unimportant, its political interest is connected with the princes of Gwynedd. When in the thirteenth century the princes of North Wales were attracting the allegiance of the South Welsh also they found Strata Florida a convenient place for important political assemblies. It was here that Llywelyn ap Iorwerth summoned all the Welsh chiefs to do homage to his son David. The monastery suffered damage during the wars of Edward I., who in 1284 granted it £78 for repairs. But it suffered the worst injuries during the rebellion of Owen Glyndwr, when the English troops used it as a barracks, and stabled their horses in church and choir.

The patriotic tone of Strata Florida is expressed in the Welsh chronicles written there. The later part of the *Annales Cambriæ* was written there, and the Brut y Tywysogion. At Margam also a chronicle was composed which has been preserved. When an abbey decided to begin a chron-

icle, the first step was to borrow a chronicle from some other house; thus Margam, founded by Robert of Gloucester, copied out the Chronicle of William of Malmesbury, which was dedicated to Robert of Gloucester. The monks of Strata Florida copied out the earlier portion of the *Annales Cambriæ*. These chronicles of course only became of historical value when they become independent and contemporary. They do not confine themselves to the monastery or local history, but relate events of general interest—to the whole of Britain and to all Europe — intermixed with notices of the burning of a monastic barn or the death of the local abbot. Knowledge of the great world came to an abbey through the travellers who stayed there; through political or ecclesiastical assemblies held there; and through public documents sent to the monks for safe-keeping or to be copied. We generally do not know who wrote these chronicles; they were rather the work of the community than of the individual monks. "Every year (so runs a regulation on the subject) the volume is placed in the *scriptorium*, with loose sheets

of paper or parchment attached to it, in which any monk may enter notes of events which seem to him important. At the end of the year, not any one who likes, but he to whom it is commanded, shall write in the volume as briefly as he can what he thinks of all these loose notes is truest and best to be handed down to posterity." "Thus it was that a monastic chronicle grew, like a monastic house, by the labour of different hands and at different times; but of the heads that planned it, of the hands that executed it, no satisfactory record was preserved. The individual is lost in the community."

Coming now to the Friaries in Wales, we find ourselves in a different atmosphere. The friars were not troubled with questions of property: they had none; they depended for their livelihood on the alms of the faithful. Again, speaking generally, one may say that while the Benedictine priory is found under the shadow of a castle, and the Cistercian abbey in the heart of the country, the friaries were built in the slums of the towns. As there were few towns in Wales,

the houses of the Mendicant Orders were not numerous or important. The Dominicans (or Black Friars) had houses at Bangor, Rhuddlan, Brecon, Haverfordwest, and Cardiff; the Franciscans (or Grey Friars) at Cardiff, Carmarthen, and Llanfaes; the Carmelites (or White Friars) at Denbigh; and the Austin Friars at Newport in Monmouthshire. It is remarkable that the Dominicans had more houses in Wales than the Franciscans; though the Franciscans—the mystic apostles of love—were more in sympathy with the Celtic spirit than the Dominicans, the stern champions of orthodoxy. Francis of Assisi strove to reproduce again on earth the life of Christ—in the letter and in the spirit; and the religious poetry of Wales in the thirteenth century is saturated with Franciscan feeling—full of intense realisation of the childhood and suffering of Christ, the humanity of God. This may be illustrated by the following poem by a Welsh friar of the thirteenth century, Madawc ap Gwallter:—

"A Son is given us,
A kind Son is born . . .
A Son to save us,
The best of Sons.

A God, a man,
And the God a man
With the same faculties.
A great little giant,
A strong puny potentate
Of pale cheeks.

Richly poor
Our father and brother,
Exalted, lowly,
Honey of minds;
With the ox and ass,
The Lord of life
Lies in a manger;
And a heap of straw
As a chair,
Clothed in tatters;

Velvet He wants not,
Nor white ermine—
To cover Him;
Around His couch
Rags were seen
Instead of fine linen."

I do not know the dates of the foundations of the Welsh Franciscan houses; the dates given in Mr. Newell's scholarly "History of the Church in Wales" are impossible. Llanfaes is said to have been established by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, and Franciscan influence would come to Wales through Thomas the Welshman, Bishop

of St. David's (1247), who had been lecturer to the Franciscans at Oxford, and was famous for his piety and learning. Another Franciscan I wish to mention is Friar John the Welshman, who in his old age was employed to negotiate with the Welsh in 1282. He had studied and taught at Oxford and Paris, and made a creditable show beside such intellectual giants as Thomas Aquinas and Roger Bacon, his contemporaries. The widespread and lasting popularity of his works is shown by the large number of manuscripts and early printed editions which have come down to us. But his chief interest and lifework was the popularisation of knowledge in the service of morality. He devoted his energies to training up lecturers who should go to the Franciscan friaries in the chief towns in England and Wales and teach friars and clergy the art of popular preaching. Friar John of Wales was one of the chief inspirers of the "University Extension" movement of the Middle Ages, These popular preachers or lecturers did not do much for the advancement of sound learning, because they did not study any

science for its own sake, but only for the moral lessons they could find in it. But, to rouse some intellectual interest in the people at large, and stimulate their moral sense, was a work not unworthy of the universities; and this aim was to some degree attained. One of the favourite ways of spending a holiday in the Middle Ages was to go and hear a friar preach. Here is a summary of a friar's sermon constructed after the method of Friar John of Wales, on the relative merits of the Ass and the Pig.

"The pig and the ass live not the same life: for the pig during his life does no good, but eats and swills and sleeps; but when he is dead, then do men make much of him. The ass is hard at work all his days and does good service to many; but when he dies, there is no profit. And that is the way of the world. Some do no good thing while they live, but eat and drink and wax fat, and then they are dragged off to the larder of hell, and others enrich themselves with their goods. Whereby I know that those, who for God's sake live the life of holy poverty, shall never lack

substance, because their heavenly Father has pigs to kill. For as the good man before the season will kill a pig or two to give puddings to his children, so will our Lord kill those hardened sinners before their time, and give their goods to the children of God. So the psalmist says: 'The bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days,' because they do no work to keep their bodies healthy. Nothing is so healthful for body and soul as honest work. Work is the life of man, the guardian of health; work drives away sin, and makes people sleep well at night. Work is the strength of feebleness, the health of sickness, the salvation of men, —quickener of the senses, foe of sloth, nurse of happiness, a duty in the young and in the old a merit. Therefore it is better to be an ass than a pig."

One of the most able of these "extension lecturers" was another Welshman — probably a native of Cardiff—Friar John David, whose lectures at Hereford were so successful that after a year both the friars and the clergy of the city declared he was indispensable, and petitioned for his reappoint-

ment. He became the head of the Franciscan province of England, and lies buried among the ruins of the church of the Grey Friars in Cardiff.

LLYWELYN AP GRUFFYDD AND THE BARONS' WAR

VI

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THROUGHOUT the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the history of England and the history of Wales are so closely bound up together that it is impossible to study either apart from the other. In illustration of this general statement I will ask you to consider briefly the history of twelve years, from 1255 to 1267—a period of special interest to us, because these are the years in which Llywelyn's power was founded and built up.

In 1255 occurred three events of great importance to Wales: (1) Llywelyn overthrew his brothers in battle; (2) Edward Longshanks took possession of his Chester estates; (3) Edmund Crouchback was formally proclaimed king of Sicily.

1. David, younger son of Llywelyn ap

Iorwerth, died in 1246, leaving no descendants, and the Principality was seized by the three sons of his elder brother Gruffydd—Owain the Red, Llywelyn, and David. For some years they held together, because Henry III. opposed the accession of any of them, claiming the Principality as a lapsed fief under a treaty made with the last prince, David ap Llywelyn. But after a time the king accepted the homage and recognised the rights of the sons of Gruffydd. Being thus freed from direct hostility of the English king, the joint rulers soon quarrelled, and came to open war in 1255. "By the instigation of the devil," says the Brut y Tywysogion, "a great dissension arose between the sons of Gruffydd—namely, Owain the Red and David on the one side, and Llywelyn on the other. And thereupon Llywelyn and his men awaited without fear, trusting in God, at Bryn Derwin the cruel coming of his brother accompanied by a vast army, and before the end of one hour Owain was taken and David fled, after many of the army were killed and others

captured, and the rest had taken to flight. And then Owain the Red was imprisoned; and Llywelyn took possession of the territory of Owain and David without any opposition." Thus Gwynedd was united under one ruler.

2. It was the policy of Henry III. to collect the earldoms into the hands of his relations. Thus the great palatine earldom of Chester, having lapsed to the Crown through failure of heirs, was granted in 1254 to the king's eldest son, Edward. Besides Chester and its dependencies Edward received Montgomery and the royal lands in South Wales (Cardigan and Carmarthen), Ireland and Gascony—in fact all the territory outside England over which the king had rights. These possessions were calculated to give the heir to the throne a varied experience and splendid training in the art of government. Edward was in need of such training, as the story of his early years shows. He was only sixteen years of age in 1255, but in the Middle Ages men lived short lives and matured very early. Edward was married in 1254, and had much experience

in war and statesmanship before he was twenty. It was a wild time, and young Edward was among the wildest spirits; as he rode through the country, accompanied by his two hundred followers—mostly rollicking and arrogant foreign adventurers—who robbed and devastated the land, and thrashed and even mutilated passers-by for fun, people looked forward with great fear to the accession of such a ruffian. A few years of responsibility, and failure, soon changed him into the noblest and most law-abiding of the Plantagenets. It was Wales which gave him his first lesson. He first tried his hand at the reorganisation of the "Middle Country," making it "shire-land," introducing the English law and administrative system; the same policy was put in force in Cardigan and Carmarthen, which formed one shire with a Shiremoot and the usual institutions of an English county. Some Welshmen had already petitioned the king for the introduction of English law into Wales, complaining that by Welsh law the crime of the guilty is visited on the innocent relations. At best it was a task

which required very careful management, and Edward and his advisers were as yet quite unfitted for it, prone as they were to violent methods, having an insolent contempt for all customs and habits which differed from those to which they were used, and all classes except their own. The result is thus expressed by the Welsh chronicler: After Edward returned to England, "the nobles of Wales came to Llywelyn, having been robbed of their liberties and made captives, and declared they would rather be killed in war for their liberty than suffer themselves to be trampled on by strangers. And Llywelyn was moved at their tears, and invaded the Middle Country and subdued it all before the end of the week." In this work Llywelyn was assisted by descendants of Rhys, the princes of South Wales, who in Cardigan suffered from Prince Edward's policy in the same way as the men of the Middle Country or Four Cantreds. This union of North and South Wales is one of the special characteristics of the struggle under Llywelyn ap Gruffydd. That the Welsh of the North

should join those of the South was, notes Matthew Paris, "a circumstance never known before." And Llywelyn was statesman enough to see the importance of this union and take steps to strengthen it. After recovering the Middle Country, he marched south, took possession of Cardigan and Builth—then a possession of the Crown, though in the custody of Mortimer—and gave these districts to Meredydd, grandson of the Lord Rhys, to hold as vassal—a wise measure, intended to bind the South to him by common interests. Matthew Paris, who holds up the Welsh resistance to tyranny as an example to the English, puts in Llywelyn's mouth a striking speech in favour of unity: "Let us then stand firm together; for if we remain inseparable we shall be insuperable"—the very words of Gerald of Barry, whose advice had borne some fruit. But Meredydd soon proved a traitor, and the failure of Henry III.'s campaign in 1257 was less due to the union of the Welsh than to the disunion of the English.

3. This brings us to the third event

referred to above—the proclamation of Edmund as King of Sicily. The Pope was trying to conquer Sicily, but wanted some one else to pay the war budget. After trying various people he induced Henry III. to accept the crown of Sicily for Edmund and promise enormous sums for the payment of the papal armies, and pledge his whole kingdom as security for the payment. This, coming on the top of many years of misgovernment and a long series of extortions, led directly to the crisis of the reign—the revolution known as the Provisions of Oxford in 1258, by which the powers of government were taken away from the Crown and given to committees of barons.

The disaffection against Henry III. at once made itself felt in the Welsh war. "Those who had promised the king assistance did not come;" and when the whole knighthood of England were called out to meet at Chester, only "manifold complaints and murmurs were heard." We might have expected the Marcher Lords at any rate to rally round the king; but they were not disposed to assist in

building up a royal power in Wales which would endanger their independence, and were glad enough to stand by and see the scheme thwarted. Some of them even went so far as to send secret information to the Welsh prince. The king had to retreat ingloriously, pursued by Llywelyn, and followed by the derisive sneers of the enemy. It may interest some of us to note that in this war the English army fought, as often, under the Dragon standard; probably the Dragon made in 1244 by Edward Fitz Odo, the King's goldsmith, who was commanded to make it "in the manner of a standard or ensign, of red samit, to be embroidered with gold, and his tongue to appear as though continually moving, and his eyes of sapphire or other stones agreeable to him." This was in 1257; the king was still less able to attack Llywelyn in 1258 and the following years, and had to agree to an ignominious truce.

Almost the whole English baronage under the leadership of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, combined

against the king, who was only supported by the royal family and those of his foreign relations to whom he had given earldoms and baronies and bishoprics in England or Wales. If Llywelyn had contented himself with occupying the royal lands in Wales—the territories granted to Edward—and with seizing Powys, which held to the English king, he would have had nothing to fear at this time from the English baronage, and the Crown was powerless to resist. It is clear from the English chroniclers that there was a genuine admiration for the Welsh resistance on the part of the English people. "Their cause," says Matthew Paris, "seemed a just one even to their enemies." But Llywelyn attacked the great Marcher Lords; it was difficult for a champion of Welsh patriotism to avoid doing so—it may be also that Llywelyn failed to grasp thoroughly the political situation in England, as he certainly failed to grasp it after the accession of Edward I. The first to suffer severely from him was Roger Mortimer, lord of the Middle March; thus Llywelyn drove him

out of Gwerthrynion and Maelienydd, and added these territories to his own. Successes like these roused great enthusiasm among the Welsh gentry, though they excited the alarm and jealousy of some of the princes (such as Meredydd, and Llywelyn's brother David, who "by the instigation of the devil" deserted the cause and went over to the English). But the good men of Brecon revolted from their lord, the Earl of Hereford, and adhered to Llywelyn, who came down and received their homage in 1262.

The general situation was altered by these events. It became clear to the Lords Marchers that their power was endangered by Llywelyn's success, and that they must make common cause with Prince Edward. The Lords Marchers began to form the royalist party. Thus Mortimer, who in 1258 was among the leaders of the baronial opposition to the Crown, was in 1260 acting with the king against the barons. The Mortimers were the most directly affected of all the Marchers by the successes of Llywelyn, not only because their territories lay near

Gwynedd, but because nearly all their lands lay in or close to the Marches; they had all their eggs in the same basket, while the other leading Lords Marchers had large possessions elsewhere, from which they drew the bulk of their revenues, using their March lands as a recruiting-ground for their troops. Thus to the De Clares their estates in Kent were probably worth more as a source of income than the whole of Glamorgan; and they also had estates in Hertford and Suffolk and Hampshire, and elsewhere; the Fitzalans were great landowners in Sussex; the Bohuns of Hereford had broad acres in Huntingdon, Essex, and Hertford. To these men the limitation of the royal powers—especially of the power of taxing, and the king's right to employ foreigners in places of trust—was more important than the checking of Llywelyn's advance, which certainly weakened the king and made it easier to enforce constitutional rights against him.

Still we have here one of the causes which broke the unity of the baronage, which created a royalist party, and led to

open war. This has hardly been enough emphasised. It is generally said that the question on which the barons split was the question of the recognition of popular representation in the government of the country—the question, in a word, of a House of Commons—Simon de Montfort being the leader of the popular cause, Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester (till his death in July, 1262), the leader of the oligarchic party, which aimed merely at transferring the royal power to a committee of barons. This was undoubtedly the most important cause of the quarrel, because it was a question of principle big with results for the future, affecting the whole course of English history, while the attitude which the barons ought to take towards Llywelyn was merely for the barons a matter of political tactics. But it is probable that the latter loomed larger in the eyes of contemporaries—certainly in the eyes of most of the Lords Marchers.

Hence it came about that, when war actually broke out in the spring of 1263, the elder of the Lords Marchers fought on the

side of the king—such as Roger Mortimer and Humphrey de Bohun—though the younger men—young Gilbert of Gloucester and Humphrey de Bohun, the son of Hereford—remained under the spell of Simon de Montfort's fascination and high-minded enthusiasm. The war began in the Welsh Marches, Simon attacking the forces of Edward of Chester and Roger Mortimer—the principal royalists. As these were also the most formidable enemies of the Welsh, Llywelyn at the same time attacked them from the other side, the baronial party and Welsh co-operating, though without any formal alliance or friendly feelings. Thus in 1263 the baronial army besieged Shrewsbury, which defended itself till "a countless host" of Welshmen, came up and began to attack it from the other side; the town then surrendered to the barons lest it should fall into the hands of the Welsh.

This campaign led to a very great defection from the baronial side: the Lord Marchers generally—such as Clifford and Fitzalan—deserted Simon, who appeared as a traitor to the country. How great

the defection is shown by Simon's words: "Though all should leave me, yet with my four sons I will stand true to the just cause, which I have sworn to uphold for the honour of the Church and the good of the kingdom; I have been in many lands, pagan and Christian, but in none have I found such faithlessness as in England."

The royalists were now the strongest party in the Marches, and in 1264 Edward and Mortimer gained a number of successes over the troops of Simon and Llywelyn (who seem to have been acting together) and captured Brecon. But they were called off to the main seat of war in the Midlands, and Simon inflicted a crushing defeat on the royalists at Lewes, in Sussex, 1264. It appears that Welsh archers fought in Simon's army, but these would be South Welsh, not North Welsh, the troops of Gilbert de Clare, not those of Llywelyn. The Marchers who escaped from Lewes were followed up by Simon, and being encircled by his forces and those of Llywelyn, submitted in December, 1264.

But Simon in the hour of triumph was now near his fall, which was made inevit-

able by the defection of Gilbert de Clare and whole of the Gloucester interest. The causes of the quarrel as given in the chronicles are mainly personal. Simon, with all his greatness, was quick-tempered and overbearing, inclined to seize power for himself, and perhaps even avaricious; one may infer this from the statement of a friendly chronicler, William Rishanger: "his habitual prayer to God was that he would save him from avarice and covetousness of worldly goods." But, apart from merely personal questions, it is to be noticed that the closer the relations between Simon and Llywelyn became, the less cordial became his relations to Gilbert de Clare. Thus when Simon co-operated with Llywelyn in bringing Mortimer and the Marchers to submission in December, 1264, Gilbert began to intrigue with them; and soon after the famous parliament of 1265 had transferred to Simon the earldom of Chester—thus relieving Llywelyn of his most dangerous neighbour, Prince Edward—Gilbert definitely joined Mortimer and Edward. The meeting between the three at Ludlow is very

important; for Prince Edward now, at the instance of Gloucester, definitely pledged himself to the cause of reform and good government. It may be said for the Red Earl of Gloucester that in deserting Simon he did not desert his cause. To ensure the future of English liberties it was no longer necessary to support De Montfort: "henceforth it was not Simon but Edward who best represents the cause of orderly national progress."

A few days after the desertion of Gloucester Simon made his first formal treaty with Llywelyn, ceding to him Hawarden, Ellesmere, Montgomery, Maud's Castle, a line of fortresses along the eastern border, recognising his right to the title of Prince of Wales, and to the homage of all the Welsh barons, while Llywelyn engaged to supply Simon with five thousand spearmen and raid the estates of Mortimer and De Clare. The first part of the campaign of Evesham was carried out in Gwent. Prince Edward held the line of the Severn, separating Simon at Hereford from his English partisans. Simon, while

waiting for his English supporters to concentrate, entered Monmouthshire, where Llywelyn's spearmen joined him and ravaged the Gloucester estates, trying to entice the royalists into Wales. Edward followed; but—his pupil in war as in politics—the young prince outgeneralled him at every point, and Simon only escaped at Newport by hurried flight across the river, burning the bridge behind him. He kept the Usk between him and his enemy, but this involved a long march north, through mountains and barren country, and he got back to Hereford with a half-starved army, only to find the line of the Severn held more strongly than ever. We cannot follow out the rest of the campaign, marked as it was by brilliant strategy on the part of the young Edward, which proved him a born master of the art of war. In the final battle all the advantages were on his side, and one cannot blame the spearmen of Gwynedd for trying to save themselves by flight at the "murder of Evesham." The body of the great Earl of Leicester was shamefully mutilated by the conquerors, and his head

sent as a fitting present to Matilda de Braose, wife of Roger Mortimer.

The struggle continued for two years both in England and Wales. In England Simon's adherents held out owing to the severity of the terms which the victorious party insisted on. They are known as "The Disinherited," and their cause was championed by the two enemies—Llywelyn and Gilbert de Clare. The "Brut" states that in 1267, "Llywelyn confederated with Earl Clare; and then the earl marched with an immense army to London; and through the treachery of the citizens he got possession of the Tower. And when King Henry and his son Edward heard of this they collected an immense army and marched to London and attacked it, and upon conditions they compelled the earl and citizens to submit." "The Annals of Winchester," a contemporary English chronicle, relate the same event, but omit any mention of Llywelyn: "Earl Gilbert took London, and the Disinherited flocked to him as to their saviour; peace was settled in June, and many of the Disinherited were pacified at the instance of

the Earl of Gloucester." It is clear that each of these rivals posed as champion of the Disinherited, but for opposite reasons. Llywelyn's object was to encourage their resistance and keep England divided by civil war; Gilbert's to insist on better terms in order to induce them to yield. Gilbert was successful in bringing about peace and reform. The Disinherited were allowed to pay a fine instead of losing all their property, and many of the legal reforms demanded by the baronial party at the beginning of the struggle were embodied in the Statute of Marlborough. And now the Earl of Gloucester employed his resources in strengthening his Glamorgan lordship to resist the threatened invasion of Llywelyn by building Castell Coch and Caerphilly.

Llywelyn continued his victorious career as long as war lasted. In 1266 he inflicted a crushing defeat on Mortimer at Brecon. In the autumn of next year, when peace had been established in England, he came to terms, through the mediation of the papal legate, in the Treaty of Montgomery. Llywelyn kept the four cantreds of the

Middle Country ; also Cydewain, Ceri, Gwerthrynion, Builth, and Brecon. But Maelienydd was restored to Roger Mortimer, though Llywelyn reserved his right to appeal to the law against this article. Further, the Prince of Gwynedd received the hereditary title of Prince of Wales, and was recognised as overlord of all the Welsh barons in Wales, except Meredydd ap Rhys, who remained immediate vassal of the King of England : his territories therefore in the Vale of Towy were withdrawn from the power of Llywelyn. The Prince of Wales in return did homage and agreed to pay him 25,000 marks by instalments. The treaty is less favourable to Llywelyn than that of 1265. His rights in Deheubarth were curtailed, and he gave up his claims to Ellesmere and Montgomery, and possession of Maelienydd.

The papal legate who arranged the treaty is not to be congratulated on his draftsmanship. Many things were left undecided, and a series of disputes arose. Thus Llywelyn seems to have claimed suzerainty over the Lord of Senghenydd

as one of the "Welsh barons," though that term was surely only meant to include the Welsh barons who held directly of the king, not the vassals of the Lord of Glamorgan. But it is evident that Llywelyn did not try to abide by the treaty. He continued to intrigue with the English barons, posing as the successor of Simon de Montfort, and failing to see that Edward I. was the political heir of the great earl. He tried to throw off the suzerainty of England, with the result that he lost the independence of his country. He lived in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and flattery, and failed to realise the limits of his power. The bards by whom he was surrounded exercised a "highly pernicious influence in practical concerns," and ill-repaid his generosity by urging him to attempt the impossible.

"His bards are comely about his tables,
I have seen him generously distributing his wealth,
And his meadhorns filled with generous liquors.
I never returned empty-handed from the North.
The bards prophesy that he shall have the government and sovereign power;
Every prediction is at last to be fulfilled."

But if Llywelyn lacked the hard head of the practical statesman, if he did not, like his grandfather, merit the title of "the Great," he will always remain an attractive and striking figure in history; he possessed qualities which made him an ideal representative of the Cymric race in the Middle Ages:—

"A bold and bounteous lion—the most reckless of givers,
Man whose anger was destructive; most courteous prince;
A man sincere in grief, true in loving,
Perfect in knowledge."

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